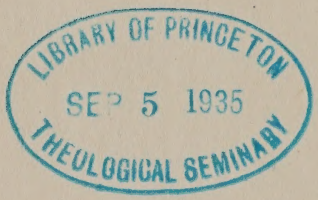
RELIGION AND RELATIONS

LARSEN



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RELIGION AND RELATIONS

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TO

DR. B. M. CHRISTENSEN

Preface

THE greater part of the material in this little book first belonged to a series of lectures which were delivered in the fall of 1932 before the Pastors' Summer School of The Lutheran Free Church. Since that time a few minor changes have been made, and one chapter has been rewritten. Furthermore, another chapter has been added.

Religion is comprehensive and profound. And it is possible, if not probable, that nobody has ever completely understood it or enjoyed it. In itself it is living and powerful. And it is of such a nature that it becomes related to the various contents of life when it is incorporated into the consciousness.

In connection with the appended bibliographies it should be borne in mind that they are by no means to be considered complete or exhaustive. In some instances they are perhaps only suggestive. In many cases, the more technical books on the subjects involved have not been mentioned.

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RELIGION AND RELATIONS

CHAPTER I

Religion and Faith

O aeterna veritas, et vera charitas,
et chara aeternitas! tu es Deus
meus; tibi suspiro die ac nocte.
—AUGUSTINE.

THE person, who has gone to Christian or theological literature for the purpose of getting a formulated statement about the nature of Christianity, soon finds out that we have not only one definition of Christianity, but many. This state of affairs is due to various factors and considerations. And each definition may be correct, or approach being true, from a certain point of view.

When we come to the subject of religion we find that similar conditions exist. Religion has been defined in many and various ways. And it is useless to make any attempts at considering how many definitions there are. Höffding considered it a faith in the conservation and continuity of values. But the true religious person, even if he admits the analytical ability of Höffding, will still find this definition un-

satisfactory. A view, that seems to come much closer to the truth of the matter, is Sabatier's. He traces religion back to the praying heart. Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, traced it back to ancestor worship and considered the essence of it mystery and wonder. Schleiermacher found the essence of religion in a sense of dependence. And to Matthew Arnold religion was something like a combination of morality and emotion. These conceptions have been referred to at random. And it is evident that it is not difficult to find various views concerning religion.

Now, the object here is not to give a presentation of philosophy of religion. Nor is it the intention to engage in studies of comparative religion. But if we deal with the subject of religion and its connections with life, we must make some kind of an attempt, and even a serious attempt, to find out something concerning the essence and nature of religion.

I

If we are to conduct investigations concerning the innermost core of religion, it is necessary to consider man and the life he lives. Religion has its subjective and its objective factors. And while it perhaps may be argued that the objective factors may be studied by themselves, nevertheless it is true that religion is manifested in man and in life. And if one is to know

something about man's religion, he must know something about the subject of religion. He must consider the actions and the reactions of man. It seems necessary then to consider some of the activities and endeavors that belong to the life of man. A procedure of this kind presents itself quite readily in this connection. And there is nothing new about it. It has been made use of and referred to in various connections time and again. The most difficult problem is perhaps that of dividing the activities of the acting subject.

We may begin with a reference to the great field of moral life. Man engages in moral activity. By moral acts we mean in general acts that conform to law and ethical standards and meet with general approval. Moral activity may be manifested along various lines and in different spheres of life. It may have the individual as object. It may have the family in view, or the community, or the state, or humanity at large, or the church. There is, of course, ample room for criticism. But nevertheless it must be admitted that much has been accomplished. Much energy has been spent. And many efforts have been put forth.

But now the question arises: Can this be considered the essence of religion? There have apparently been many who have confused morality and religion. Kant, in spite of all his penetrating analysis, perhaps

came no closer to the subject than to think that the essence of religion was morality. And in our own age it seems that the same opinion can easily be detected. There are, however, two considerations that may be brought in here. Later on we may give more consideration to the subject. For one thing, it must be borne in mind that there are actions that conform to law on the surface at any rate and receive general approval and yet do not spring from right motives. We do not need to pass judgment on the actions. But the person involved cannot be considered true and in harmony with fundamental principles. That is, we will have difficulty in believing that such a person is truly religious. And then there is another consideration. There are persons who must be considered upright moral characters. And from our knowledge of them we would not consider them religious. Furthermore, some of them, if not many of them, would disclaim all connection with accepted religion and perhaps even deny God. The conclusion seems to be that morality is not the essence of religion.

Then there are the intellectual attainments consisting of acquired general positive knowledge and a trained reasoning ability. In general we may refer to all this as knowledge. But it must, of course, be realized that it amounts only to speaking about it in a general way. No provision is made for discrimina-

tions and the formulating of definitions. And then when we proceed to investigate if knowledge is the same as religion, it is possible to make several observations.

We know, for instance, that one may acquire great knowledge concerning the life of Jesus Christ without being religious. It is possible to know about his teaching and his different journeys and yet not realize that he was more than a fine moral man. The same is true with reference to the life of Paul. It is possible to have knowledge in detail concerning his conversion without an understanding of what conversion is. Again, one may have historical knowledge concerning his activities and his great mission journeys. And yet he may not understand the religion that was the power in Paul's life.

Furthermore, it is possible to be well informed concerning the subject matter of the Christian religion without being in touch with the religion itself. One may work out a system of dogmatics, and perhaps even an orthodox system, without having the religion in his heart. One is, of course, willing in this connection to refrain from passing judgment. But observation, it seems, points to this conclusion.

There is also room for the observation that knowledge may work against religion and against Christianity. Friedrich Nietzsche may be considered a man

who had acquired considerable learning. He was a mere young man when he became professor. But his learning did not make him religious. It turned him against the Christian religion. Christianity became the object of his hatred. It was condemned. And the God of Christianity was to be rejected. Nietzsche with a perverted conception of life put the great emphasis on man.

These observations are against the idea that knowledge is the essence of religion. On the other hand, it seems that knowledge may carry one away from religion. However, it is not the knowledge as such, but the perverted use and application of it.

Then there are the emotions. They constitute powerful factors in the life of man. It is not difficult to see that emotion is a factor in religion. In the Psalms, for instance, one may perhaps find all the different classes of emotions such as fear and hope and love and joy and sorrow. And in the Confessions of Augustine we meet them again. It is the religious heart that speaks. In Rousseau's religion, which perhaps was a kind of sentimental Deism, one will find a feeling of gratitude to the supreme power. This perhaps was its main characteristic. To Schleiermacher emotion was the prominent factor in religion.

We can readily admit the place and importance of feeling in religion. But it is a different thing when the

claim is made that it constitutes the essence of religion. This is a subject that is not easily dealt with. But there is this to bear in mind, that an emotion may be carried too far. That seems to be true both of the intellectual, the moral and the religious emotions. There is then a difference between the emotion itself and that about which it centers, whether it be an object or an idea. Then it seems possible to make a distinction between religion itself and the emotion. And we can say that emotion is not religion.

It does not then seem possible to consider morality, or knowledge, or emotion the essence of religion. In neither case does the true religious type find a satisfactory explanation. Neither does it seem possible to make a combination of them the equivalent of religion. The argument could not be sustained in a satisfactory manner. And it does not satisfy the religious person. This, of course, does not mean that we do not find all of these in religion. It only means that they as such do not constitute religion. It will then be necessary to push the investigation further and penetrate deeper into the subject. And it is possible. This, of course, introduces us to a comprehensive subject. But the object here is not to give an account of Christian theology on this subject, but only to consider certain elements.

In a final analysis of the subject here involved it

seems that the religious person must penetrate into the innermost depths of his own personality and ask himself what it is that for him constitutes religion. A person who is not in religion, even if he is a scholar and a deep thinker, cannot take the religious person and make him the object of an examination for the purpose of determining what the essence of religion is. It must, of course, be admitted that opinions differ on this. Höffding maintains that the thinking that takes its rise in religion and builds on it, must not be called philosophy of religion (*Religionsfilosofi,* p. 3). But it seems that it will have to be admitted that the believer can make his religion a problem and the object of his investigation. And furthermore, it seems that it must be maintained that in these matters the religious believer himself constitutes the highest authority. Upon investigation the believer then finds that his religious life can be traced back to a personal and unique experience. When the conclusion is formulated in this manner, it need not be implied that the experience must necessarily be of the same kind as those which are often described in books on psychology of religion. Very often it is not.

But what is a religious experience? It must be admitted that it is much easier to raise the question than to give a satisfactory answer. And now I find occasion to refer to Höffding again. He claims that

it is mainly a religious feeling (*Ibid.*, p. 99). But that is not an explanation. Neither is it an argument against the religious experience as such. Two things might be noted in this connection. For one thing, it seems impossible to speak about any kind of experience without including feeling. When a child experiences that two apples in the one hand and two in the other make four, something has been incorporated into its consciousness. And there is a feeling, an intellectual feeling. Then there is also the idea of projection that philosophers and psychologists emphasize so much. It is claimed that the various ideas and contents of the religion are projected by the contemplating mind. Some of this we would be willing to admit. But that does not mean that we do away with the religious experience. If the religious experience is to be considered a mere projection by the mind and hence unreliable, then it seems we would be forced to conclude that all mental experiences and activities must be relegated to the same department. And then there is nothing in life that can be accepted as valid.

The various elements of the soul life and the mental life, that enter into the religious experience, will not necessarily be the same in every case. It will, of course, to some extent depend on the personality involved. Some of them evidently will be in every

experience. They may be referred to in more than one way. But we may say that ordinarily we will detect the sense of sin and fear and dependence and joy and gratitude.

And now we must say a few words about that which we may call the object of the experience. We shall return to it again. The subject is beset with difficulty. And we must move carefully and with deep respect. It has been brought out time and again that in most cases, in the religious experience, we only make an attempt to experience what has been described by organized religion and is demanded by it. That is true in some cases. But it could not be true as far as the first religious experience is concerned. And that is all we need to say in this connection. Again, it has been argued that all the contents of the Christian religion cannot be experienced. That we can readily admit. We need only think of the various theories concerning the atonement, or the sacraments, or the various conceptions with reference to the second coming of Christ. Upon due consideration we would make no such claim. But still we have not relinquished any ground. The religious experience itself is nevertheless a reality. Men live on it and would die for it. In the true religious experience man comes face to face with the basic and ultimate reality. He has expe-

rienced that which is entirely different from himself, something that belongs to another world.

The subject of the validity of the religious experience perhaps forces itself upon us. It has already been referred to indirectly, and we need not say very much about it here. It is a subject that must be considered in close connection with life itself. And it is practical in its nature. This, of course, does not mean that it must not be given a critical and philosophical analysis and explanation. Life is a process of inter-action. In this inter-action man and objectivity are involved. What does man then get out of this process? We may perhaps say that it ultimately depends upon himself. It depends on his acting and re-acting. To some the result has been only a universe interpreted in terms of science. To others it has been a system of metaphysics in terms of philosophy. And to a host of others it has been not only a scientifically and philosophically interpreted universe, but something else and something more. We know that there are deep longings and burning cravings in the human heart. And man has experienced that it is possible to find help in this respect. He has found out that there is a solution and that his agitated heart may be stilled. This has happened time and again in the history of men. But it is not the mere universe of science that has met the requirements. It is in this

connection that we must insist on the genuineness and validity of the religious experience. Of course, the subject has not been exhausted. It is possible to bring in many other considerations. But at the same time it seems to me that it is sufficient in this place. And it seems that it can be said in this way without introducing or suggesting the subject of pragmatism.

Before we leave this phase of the subject, we may be reminded that while it seems that religion must be traced back to an experience by the individual, yet it must not be considered a phase or a closed compartment of the personality. Religion involves the entire personality. With some there has been an inclination to locate religion in a special faculty of the mind. But such a splitting of the personality seems impossible. Religion pervades all the activities of the personality. And when man embraces it, both his thinking, his feeling and his will are involved. And that is finally due to the fact that personality is a unity.

II

Turning to the subject of faith, we find a voluminous literature on the subject. Faith has been dealt with in many ways and from various points of view. Theology in all ages naturally has given the subject consideration and has expressed its conception and formulated its teaching. Philosophy also has found

it an interesting subject, both philosophy in general and philosophy of religion. In more recent times psychology of religion has turned to the subject. And naturally it would. The treatment, which the subject receives, is of various kinds. And that would seem to be true with reference both to theologians as such, philosophers, and psychologists. While we may assume, if we cannot always take for granted, that so-called psychologists of religion have much knowledge concerning psychology, it seems that we cannot always rest assured that they are competent as far as the subject of religion is concerned.

We find then many views presented and a considerable amount of ambiguity on the subject. There are many definitions of faith and many statements as to its nature. We have both the term "faith" and the term "belief." And in some cases we find the one term in the subject of the sentence and the other in the predicate. How much light is thrown on the subject is in some cases a question.

In the New Testament the Greek word πίστις is used in various ways. And even where it can perhaps best be translated by the term "faith" it may have another shade of meaning. The apostle Paul employs the term in various connections. In the fourth chapter of Romans he speaks of the faith of Abraham.

For one thing the term seems to convey the idea of trusting in the promises of God. But it also seems to develop into an attitude of life assumed by Abraham in relation to God. In the third chapter of the same document we have the strong and explicit reference to faith or trust in Jesus Christ. In several places, where the term occurs, the reference is to Christian life as such. In the Epistle to the Hebrews we have not only the idea of confidence in the promises of God, but also the idea of a firm conviction with reference to the unseen. In the Johannine writings we meet more of a mystical and contemplative faith. And in the Synoptic Gospels the reference is often to belief in the promises of God or Christ.

In theology and religion in general we also find various aspects of faith brought out. We may refer to Luther. But we must bear in mind that it is difficult to refer to him and his faith in a few words. However, we may perhaps say that the main characteristic of his faith was a simple personal trust in God and his promises and a firm conviction about the forgiveness of sin on account of the grace in Jesus Christ. With Luther the great problem was not in connection with the existence of God or knowledge concerning God. It was more a matter of getting into the right relation with God. If we turn to the fourth article of the Augsburg Confession, we find similar

aspects brought out. There it is taught "that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake." With some, faith seems to amount to an acceptance of certain dogmas. And with others it is a kind of mystical insight.

It is apparent then that it is not easy to give a definition of faith. It seems that men approach the subject from different points of view and work with it along various lines. In recent times many new books with valuable contributions to the subject have appeared. But we may be reminded that one cannot say for the rest of humanity what faith is. One has to work with it in terms of his own thinking and try to decide as far as it is possible. It would perhaps be more correct to say that one must try to determine for himself what is understood by it. For faith in itself does not change any more than love does. Certain formal elements may change. But the trouble is that language is not always adequate to the task imposed upon it. Now the intention is not to give a presentation of this comprehensive subject. It is merely to consider a few things.

Faith is intimately tied up with religion. It is impossible to have religion, in the true sense of the

word, without faith. Often faith is thought of as an equivalent of religion. We have already noted that Paul uses the term "faith" where the reference is to the Christian faith or religion. The apostle Peter uses the term in the same sense. And we can find that the same usage has continued down through the ages to the present time. All this reminds us of the close connection between the two.

Then I think we can say that faith must be traced back to the religious experience. They must at any rate be closely connected. This, however, is not anything new or radical. More or less the same opinion has been expressed time and again. The important thing is that the experience in religion must not be overlooked. In this the individual finds himself face to face with something that belongs to a different sphere of existence. He experiences another world. This existence is not yet understood. But the process of life continues. And with it there will be both action and reaction. This seems to be something that cannot be argued out of existence. Then the attitude of the individual, which has been vague and indefinite up to this point, will become clearer and more definite in relation to the object of the religious experience. This, I think, must be considered to belong to the initial stages of faith. Then if the process continues the element of conviction will be developed.

And a more definite relation will be established between the individual and that which he has met in the religious experience. And thus it becomes possible for the individual to gain more knowledge concerning the object of his religion.

At this point the voice of opposition may perhaps be heard from the camp of positive science and theoretical knowledge. It may be claimed that knowledge gained in faith is not scientific knowledge. That we can readily admit if we only understand everything in the right way. In the strict sense of the term, scientific knowledge consists of verified facts in the world of phenomena. Science makes use of hypotheses. And when it does that it is for the purpose of gaining further knowledge. But the hypothesis is only a working theory. It is not scientific knowledge. Science has its beginnings in experience and is mainly experience. And while religion is experience it is experience in another, a higher, order of existence. And it does not depend on the method of positive science, nor on a piece of syllogistic reasoning. The old idea, which Pascal expressed, seems to be true. There is reason in faith, but reason may not know anything about it.

In faith there is also the element of trust. We may perhaps say that faith is trust and trust is faith. To a certain extent this is true. But it is possible to make

a distinction. To trust is mainly to have confidence in, to depend on. Now that is an element that may be wanting in a practical sense, even if there may be what we should have to call a faint beginning of faith. In the Christian religion, it seems to me, it may be observed time and again that the element of trust is often to a great extent lacking. If we conceive of trust in this manner, I think we can say that it depends on a developed faith. For one does not place confidence in anything concerning which he has not gained what he considers reliable knowledge. But, of course, faith and trust are not separated in such a way that only one functions at the time. When one makes experiments in faith he also ventures out in trust. And as faith increases, trust will also ordinarily be more developed.

We have now considered something of the essence of religion. And we have seen the place and importance of faith in it and noted some of its characteristics. It will then be proper to consider a few things in connection with the object of religion.

III

It is of the utmost importance to the religious person that the object of his religion is real and valid, and that he can rest assured that it is. Religion as such would be shaken in its foundations and collapse

if its object should be demonstrated to be a mere creation of fancy. In more recent times there has been a strong tendency to question the validity of the religious knowledge. And in a way it is not so difficult to understand. For when certain elements of idealism have been accepted and certain views with reference to theory of knowledge are held, then it may perhaps easily come to be natural to favor the conclusion that the object of this kind of knowledge has been created by the subject involved. But then on the other hand it must also be noted that strong and determined efforts have been put forth in defense of the object of religion.

Then we face the great question concerning the nature of this object. It may be designated God. But what is meant by it? In the different ages through the entire course of human history there have been men who have referred to the object of their religion as God. But we cannot conclude from their use of this term to the nature of their religion. We must know something about their teaching or their theology before we can decide what they mean by God. And while we must be careful that we do not make the formal elements, which once have been decided upon, the final criterion in all our investigations and judgments, there is nevertheless room for consideration and conclusions.

For those who are acquainted with the history of philosophy it is perhaps not so difficult to be reminded of men like Xenophanes and Parmenides in this connection. Several hundred years before the dawn of the Christian era the Ionian, Xenophanes, traveled in Greece as a philosopher. He was an opponent of polytheism and a defender of monotheism. And he objected to what we should perhaps call theological anthropomorphism. He emphasized in his teaching that there was only one God. And his complaint was that people had many gods, and in their picture of them they used human beings as patterns and included both human form and human passions. We may perhaps admit that here is much to be admired. But nevertheless it seems that the religion which Xenophanes proclaimed was only pantheism. It was a kind of philosophical monism.

In the seventeenth century Spinoza proclaimed a similar philosophical pantheism. To him God was identified with substance, and substance was God. And in modern times the zoölogist Haeckel has in vehement terms defended the cause of pantheism. He also came to the conclusion that man had made God according to his own image. And some of the teachings of Christianity, if not all of them, were but foolish conceptions. In his teaching he has not failed to state what he meant by God. And he has been care-

ful to refer to Spinoza and Goethe. We have here another example of pantheism and monism.

With others, God has been identified with metaphysical principles or interpreted in terms of value. Immanuel Kant had God in his categories. This must be admitted. But I have difficulty in seeing that it was more than a God postulated by practical reason.

Now it will have to be admitted that in the opinion of many this kind of God does not meet the requirements of religious thinking and interpretation and does not satisfy the longings of the human heart. In religious faith it is the human personality that acts and reacts and reaches out to something beyond itself. Now it cannot be demonstrated that the religious consciousness cannot apprehend more than a universe interpreted by science or attain to more than a conviction that values abide, or that metaphysical principles cannot be abrogated. Höffding maintained that religious faith is mainly a faith in the continuation of values. But over against this it must be affirmed that there are many who will not accept this as an adequate explanation. While it must be admitted that values are involved in religion, it must on the other hand be stated that the genuine religious faith does not stop at the values. It reaches beyond them. And if we should try to determine where it comes to rest, it seems that we must point to that

which is the source and the governing power of the values. This, it seems, will force the conclusion that we have to do with a personal being. This being, the religious consciousness interprets as God. Religious faith then is faith in a personal God.

In a consideration of the subject concerning God, a problem meets us which has already been referred to indirectly in several connections. It is the problem concerning the existence of the living personal God. This problem has at all times been forced upon religion from various directions. And those who stand outside of religion apparently make more out of it than the believer does. In all seriousness and with all reverence and respect we have to admit that we are unable to advance a so-called scientific proof for the existence of God. But I do not think that this is an argument against our religion. For we must remember that in religion we move beyond the world known to positive science. And our faith is not based upon data which science advances.

We have the so-called proofs of the existence of God, the cosmological, the ontological, the teleological, the logical, and the moral proof. These arguments were shattered more or less by Kant, although he realized that the teleological proof deserved consideration. And we can readily see that most of these arguments, if not all of them, can be used also by

deism and pantheism. Nevertheless, these arguments are still worthy of consideration. They have apologetic value. They cannot convince the reasoning intellect with a cogent proof that God exists. But they can support the faith of the person who has met God. They may, of course, also be instrumental in helping a person to find God.

Our knowledge of God, of course, is imperfect and inadequate. But the believing heart nevertheless claims to know something about the God with whom it communes. It claims that he is a living personal God. But when we then continue to inquire concerning our knowledge of God, we may have difficulty in determining how much is to be included. However, it seems that certain features cannot be neglected in the picture of God.

One thing which must be included is this, that God occupies a category distinct from that of man and the universe. He is then a superior God. This, however, must not be taken to mean that we want to be identified with Deism. This theology emphasized the transcendence of God. In our own age Karl Barth has placed new emphasis on the transcendent God. This, however, is perhaps to be understood only in an epistemological sense. The superiority of God is important. And it is perhaps necessary at the present time to emphasize his transcendence over against a

tendency to reduce everything in religion to a superficial subjectivism. But it must, of course, not receive undue emphasis. For while God is superior, he can nevertheless be reached by the human heart.

And this introduces us to another feature which the believer wants to include. It is the nearness of God. Pantheism has placed the emphasis on the immanence of God. And we may say that it should be emphasized. For the believer has experienced it. But on the other hand we are far from Pantheism. For Pantheism fails to recognize a God elevated above the universe. There is perhaps more difficulty with the idea about the nearness of God. But the religious consciousness recognizes it. And the idea is found both in the Old and the New Testament.

In a further and more specific discussion of the Christian religion Jesus Christ, of course, comes in for consideration. The Christian faith involves the accepting of him as the one who came from God and is the Saviour of Man. He is the center of our religion. When the believers in Antioch were first called Christians it was because it was realized that Christ was important in their religion.

If we refer to the apostle Paul we may be reminded of what is involved. The religion of Paul is a difficult subject if everything is to be considered. But he has himself referred to his life as a follower of

the Jewish religion. And he has told us about his life as a Christian. We know that he had a unique religious experience. And Christ entered into his consciousness and became the object of his faith.

In this connection religion is closely connected with history. Christ was a historical person. A message was recorded concerning him. And this has been preserved by the church. That, of course, does not imply that the Christian religion is merely the acceptance of history. For it is not. But we emphasize the necessity of the message concerning the Christ whom Paul met. And we realize that the Christian faith is a personal conviction that God has been revealed in him.

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

Höffding: Religionsfilosofi
Hudson: Recent Psychology and the Christian Religion
Otto: The Idea of the Holy
Snowden: The Psychology of Religion
Haeckel: Last Words on Evolution
Galloway: Faith and Reason in Religion
Hoyle: The Teaching of Karl Barth
Geismar: Religionsfilosofi
Hallesby: Principlaeren
Krarup: Religionsfilosofi
Otto: The Philosophy of Religion
Sabatier: Outlines of a Philosophy of Religion
Fairbairn: The Philosophy of the Christian Religion
Monrad: Religionsfilosofi
Eucken: The Truth of Religion
Brown: Pathways to Certainty

RELIGION AND RELATIONS

JONES: Studies in Mystical Religion
JONES: New Studies in Mystical Religion
FISHER: Faith and Rationalism
WRIGHT: Faith Justified by Progress
KNUDSON: The Doctrine of God
FISKE: The Idea of God
PRATT: Psychology of Religious Belief
JONES: Pathways to the Reality of God
JAMES: The Varieties of Religious Experience
TILLETT: The Paths That Lead to God
DRESSER: Psychology of Religion
ADDISON: The Theory and Practice of Mysticism
RALL: The Meaning of God
BARTH: Der Römerbrief
STRACHAN: The Authority of Christian Experience
BRUNNER: The Theology of Crisis
TURNER: The Revelation of Deity
DALE: The Living Christ and the Four Gospels
ROYCE: Sources of Religious Insight
VALENTINE: What Do We Mean by God
BENNETT: A Philosophical Study of Mysticism
STARBUCK: The Psychology of Religion
UNDERHILL: Mysticism
MARTENSEN: Jacob Böhme
DE CONNINCH AND SUNDBY: Pascals Tanker
STEARNS: The Evidence of Christian Experience
NIELSEN: Religionsfilosofi
STRICKLAND: Psychology of Religious Experience
DEISSMANN: The Religion of Jesus and the Faith of Paul
LAIRD: The Idea of the Soul

CHAPTER II

Religion and Knowledge

THE problem concerning religion and knowledge, or faith and knowledge, is an old one. Every great religion has had it in some form. And the Christian religion is no exception. Here the object is not to make any attempt to deal with this great problem in all its comprehensiveness. We are confining ourselves to certain things in connection with the Christian religion and knowledge. Christianity has always had to face this problem. And it is still compelled to deal with it. Many solutions have appeared. But no one has met with general approval. And it is a question if the situation will ever be much changed.

I

It is not a correct presentation of the matter when it is said that no information on the subject can be gained from Scripture. It is true that the subject of faith and knowledge is not dealt with as such. But it is not difficult to see that the writers of the New Testament were conscious of both faith and knowledge. What we perhaps can say is this, that these

men had solved the problem in favor of faith. It was perhaps not in every case a very scientific or philosophical solution. But it was their solution. They had arrived at some conclusion. Their religion with faith in Christ as the one who had come from God had given them a new attitude and a new outlook upon life. Furthermore, I do not think we are justified in saying that the early Christians did not find time or take time for reflection and philosophical thinking because they expected the return of Christ in the near future. Knowledge of the writings of Paul would prevent such a view. It is, of course, true that the conflict between faith and knowledge was not so pronounced among the Christians of the apostolic age as it came to be when Christianity came in contact with Greek philosophy.

The religious thinkers who are not ready and willing to accept finished lessons have always had their problems in relation to the contents of life. This can be seen in every period of history. There were problems in the ancient church when the Christian religion and Greek philosophy met. And there were problems later on. In the Middle Ages we meet with men like Thomas Aquinas and William of Occam. Thomas Aquinas found harmony between philosophy and the dogmas of the church. Faith and knowledge were separate fields of activity. Theology as such

dealt with the absolute and supreme. It thus had authority over knowledge or science and could transcend reason. But there was no conflict between faith and reason. William of Occam was skeptical and critical. He made a clear and sharp distinction between faith and reason. To him something could be true in theology which was not true in philosophy. Thus we are reminded of the two classes of truth, *duae veritates*.

Immanuel Kant belongs to the more modern times. He was stirred up by the detrimental skepticism of Hume. And face to face with sensationalism and rationalism he had the problem of trying to combine them. In his search for certainty as far as scientific knowledge was concerned he went very far and made great contributions to the subject. But there was a limit to the phenomenal world and to what could be established. In his analysis of pure reason he had attained to no more than to refer to God as an idea of the understanding whose objective existence could not be proved. God, in other words, was not real to him. But Kant realized the importance of moral life. And in his theory of ethics he made God a postulate of the practical reason. The moral will demanded God. And so he was provided for. But he was not an object that knowledge in terms of pure reason could accept. He was to be accepted in faith, we may per-

haps say. But I think it is possible to give Kant too much credit in this connection. We must give him all that belongs to him. But it is plain that knowledge and faith are distinctly separated. Knowledge is supreme, and faith is subordinate.

In Denmark in the nineteenth century the religious philosopher S. Kierkegaard placed faith and knowledge over against each other. Faith was the paradox which knowledge had to recognize, while at the same time it had to admit that it could not understand or explain it. The paradox then could not be apprehended by reason.

In this connection another Danish philosopher can be mentioned who is not so well known as Kierkegaard. It is R. Nielsen, who was professor of philosophy at the University of Copenhagen. He had been a disciple of Hegel. But he came to realize that the harmony of reason and faith in favor of reason, which Hegel and others had advocated, was an illusion. Now while Kierkegaard had emphasized the paradox of faith, Nielsen went even further in emphasizing the impossibility of reconciling faith and knowledge. By these two men faith and knowledge are placed in antithesis to each other.

It would be possible to refer to others who in some way have worked out a solution to this problem. The names of men like Schleiermacher and Jacobi readily

suggest themselves. But without considering other examples, we can easily see, not only that the problem has always existed, but also that it has been solved in different ways by different men.

One source of difficulty in connection with these attempts at solution of a difficult problem is, of course, the fact that men in every case have not had the same conception of religion and knowledge. Consequently they would not be able to establish the relation between them in the same way. That, we might perhaps think, we could expect. But it is not the case. And it seems that the determining of what religion and knowledge are is a part of the problem of deciding on the relation between them.

This problem is still with us. We must decide, at any rate for ourselves, what the relation between them is. But then we must also determine what we mean by religion and knowledge. Now we have seen that religion is not in its essence knowledge. It is more than knowledge in the ordinary sense of the term. It transcends the material world and reaches into another. It is subjective and is intimately tied up with personality and values. When we consider knowledge, we will readily admit, I think, that it yields with great difficulty to definition. It depends, of course, on how inclusive we make the concept. But it seems that we have to make it comprehensive

enough to include both that which is objective and deals with concrete facts, and that which is pure and abstract, that is, thinking.

But that does not mean, it seems, that religion and knowledge are in conflict with each other or could ever come into conflict. It seems impossible to see that true religion and true knowledge could ever be against each other. That would imply two classes of truth. And it would involve a splitting of the personality which both embraces religion and apprehends facts of knowledge. It seems that we must say that knowledge as such cannot be against religion, and that religion as such is not against knowledge. Religion accepts true knowledge and makes use of it.

We cannot be blind to the fact that there has often been difficulty. There has been conflict between religion and knowledge. But really it was not a conflict between true religion and true knowledge. Religion has apparently at times gone too far in fixing the contents of its teachings. And some of its adherents have paid more attention to the formulated teachings than to the religion itself. They have to some extent confused the two. Knowledge also has often gone too far, not with its definite facts, but with its interpretation of facts. The advocates of knowledge have confused the facts and their interpretation of them. Thus the conflict has come about.

Another thing to be noted in connection with these conflicts is the fact that often, when a new fact is discovered, an adjustment may be necessary on the part of religion. And it may happen that some time is required by the individuals involved to make the necessary adjustment. Ordinarily our feelings are slow in changing and making transitions from the old to the new. Thus the adjustment may take some time. And until the adjustment is made there may be something like a conflict.

Life itself, it seems to me, points the way in this connection. For it may be observed time and again that religion is able to accept knowledge and make use of it. And it does it without suffering and without losing itself. There may be some difficulty when the two meet. But eventually true religion recognizes all that is true. In other words, actual life shows us the relation between religion and knowledge.

II

It is a tremendous task to consider two such forces in their relation in actual life. Even with a limited scope there is difficulty. The subject of knowledge is very comprehensive to say the least. It is difficult to make a survey of it. Various schemes of knowledge have been made. But without intention to criticize, it may perhaps be said that they are all defective. It is

extremely difficult to include everything. Now without intending to make a scheme of knowledge, I would like to refer to what might be called departments of knowledge. And in connection with each of them we might note a few things in their relation to religion. And even with this limitation one has to be careful. For it is difficult to be a specialist in one thing. And it is perhaps impossible when more than one is considered. With this understanding we might speak of history, language, science and philosophy as branches of knowledge and then observe a few things in connection with each of them.

Turning now to the department of history, I would like to refer to a few things which in theology would belong in the department of exegetical theology. But they have come up more or less as historical critical investigations. Therefore we can consider them here.

In connection with the Synoptic Gospels we have among other things the problem concerning the date of their composition. Which Gospel was written first? It is an old tradition that Matthew was written first. But that opinion is not generally entertained now. Many, if not all, now favor the priority of Mark. And some are even of the opinion that it is no longer necessary to prove that Mark wrote first. There are, however, others that advance the opinion that Mark is in debt to Matthew. This then must be

considered a problem that is not definitely settled. And we have as yet no absolutely certain historical knowledge as to who wrote first. This is not a serious problem. And if it some day will be conclusively proved that Mark is prior to the others, religion will have no difficulty in accepting the fact.

We might also refer to the Gospel of John and this time take the question concerning the authorship. This is a much disputed question. Most scholars perhaps support the view that the apostle John wrote it. But others are strongly opposed to this view. It would not be difficult to mention names in this connection. But it is not necessary. The situation brings this before us that there are several possibilities. Some then decide in favor of one as the author, and others in favor of another. Here it might be observed that interpretation to a large extent enters in. And religion certainly has the right to have its own opinion in the matter. If it, however, should turn out to be a fact that the apostle John did not write the fourth Gospel, then religion will recognize it. But in this case some people might require some time to make the adjustment.

For further illustrations along this line we might refer to a group of Paul's letters, the so-called captivity letters. One question among others in connection with these letters is the one concerning the place

of writing. Some have advocated that Paul wrote these letters in Cesarea. But Rome is perhaps most generally accepted as the place. Still others have suggested that Ephesus is the place. The argument has been elaborated upon by Duncan of St. Andrews in his book, *St. Paul's Ephesian Ministry*. And in each case there are plausible arguments. If this problem is ever settled the one way or the other we shall have a fact. And religion will accept it. In the meantime it is mainly interpretation of certain facts. And religion need have no difficulty on account of the uncertainty.

Thus far we have considered examples mainly from historical criticism. It is also possible to adduce examples in this connection from textual criticism. This discipline must be considered of great value even if work with the subject at times has caused some difficulty and disturbance.

Let us take an example from the first part of the fifth chapter of the Gospel of John. There is the story of the man who was healed at Bethesda. In the fourth verse is the reference to the periodic visit of the angel that stirred up the water in the pool. This verse, however, is wanting in the best manuscripts. And it is not incorporated in the text of the revised editions of the New Testament. It seems to be an interpolation on the basis of verse 7. Here evidently scientific investigation has established as fact that

verse 4 never was a part of the genuine text. And religion will accept the verdict of knowledge even if some believers perhaps are slow in reconciling themselves to the fact.

We will take another example of the same kind and refer to verses 7 and 8 of the fifth chapter of the first letter of John. Erasmus himself had not been able to find any Greek manuscripts that contained these words. When a Greek cursive manuscript finally was produced which contained the passage, he printed it because of a promise that he had made. But the manuscript was from the sixteenth century and evidently translated from a Vulgate manuscript. It seems to be an established fact that this passage never belonged to the original text. It is not a part of our New Testament. It was omitted in the Revised Version. And this was the cause of much offence to begin with. The omitted words were considered a proof-passage for the doctrine of the Trinity. And naturally the words were considered very valuable. Christianity was slow in yielding to the new discovery. It took time to make the adjustment. But Christians have come to realize that their faith is not tied up with a passage that can be demonstrated to be false.

Language as a field of study would give us much interesting material in this connection. But there is

just one thing to which I would like to call attention. It is the problem concerning the language of the New Testament.

It seems now that we must conclude that there has been something like a revolution in the philology of the New Testament. There was a time when people were reminded of the so-called controversy between the Purists and the Hebraists. It was a debate concerning the nature of the language of the New Testament. Some even went so far as to speak of the Greek of the New Testament as the language of the Holy Spirit. Gradually, however, men came to realize that this language was not a unit by itself. Now through the efforts of Deissmann in Germany and Moulton in England, and a host of others, it has been established that the New Testament Greek is the Greek that was used throughout the Roman empire at the time when Christianity came into existence.

As we think about this situation we are reminded that there was a time when the religious mind was anxious and troubled, fearing that the Christian faith might suffer harm if it should be necessary to change views concerning the New Testament because of scientific research. But now the situation is changed. The adjustment is being made. And Christianity, in the new light, has begun to make use of

some of the established facts. There is no conflict between religion and knowledge in this respect.

Now we come to the relation of religion and science. And it is a tremendous field full of almost all kinds of material. It is just a general broad statement when we say that religion has had difficulty time and again because of science. And it is not merely one discipline of the comprehensive field of science that has caused difficulty. Many of them, if not all of them, have interfered with religion as it has expressed itself at various times. It would be impossible to cover the subject. But a few things may be noted.

One discipline of science that has come into close contact with religion a number of times is astronomy. It was but natural that the first Christians accepted the prevailing conceptions in astronomy with reference to the earth and the celestial bodies. One old conception, more or less in harmony with the Old Testament, was that the earth was flat and above it was the heaven or sky like a vaulted ceiling. And it is natural and perhaps most likely that the apostles and early preachers entertained this idea if they gave much consideration to the subject. Paul, the most learned of all of them, perhaps also accepted this view. But it is not necessary to think that they experienced any difficulty in this respect or came into conflict with other views and theories. For they were

concerned about the preaching of the Christian religion and not about theories of astronomy.

But the ancient church had its difficulty with astronomy. The influence of the Ptolemaic system was felt. This system still placed the earth in the center. It was considered to be a sphere. But it was not in motion. The ancient church had a problem in this connection. Was the earth flat, or was it spherical? In some parts of the church they continued to adhere to the old conception that the earth was flat. In other places they were more liberal. Many of the church-fathers were willing to accept the theory that the earth was a sphere. But the church as such did not escape difficulty in connection with the different astronomical theories.

The Ptolemaic system prevailed then more or less in the church for many centuries. But in the sixteenth century the church had to face another astronomical theory. In the beginning of this century Copernicus had written a book concerning the revolutions of the celestial bodies. He had studied both the Pythagorean and the Ptolemaic systems. And he had come to the conclusion that the sun was in the center of the universe and the planets moved around the sun. The book mentioned before, he finally published in 1543. What he feared actually happened. It was condemned by the Inquisition. And his system was

denounced. Luther rejected the new theory. And Melanchthon also was unwilling to accept it.

We might also refer to Galileo and Bruno. Galileo had come out in defense of the theories of Copernicus. And in 1632 he published a book in which he tried to vindicate the Copernican system. But the church interfered and compelled him to curse the new teachings. And then he was put in prison. It is, of course, true that the authorities of the church were moved by various considerations. But it is nevertheless a fact that the new astronomical theories met with opposition from the church.

This situation has been referred to by many as a conflict between religion and science. And there was a conflict. But upon due consideration we shall have to admit that it was not a conflict between true religion and true science. We need only think of the various conceptions in astronomy. They could not all be science in the true sense of the word. It was not all established facts. For as far as we know, the universe itself has not changed. It was interpretation or theory to a great extent. Over against this it must, of course, also be admitted that the church at times has been thinking more of its dogmas and its old traditions than of its sacred faith and its relation to God. Now most people accept the Copernican theory in general as true. And we know that religion has been

able to make the required adjustment to what is considered to be fact.

A subject of science, which has received much attention for quite a number of years is evolution. It is a subject concerning which there is much confusion. But it seems that we must accept evolution as a fact. And it seems that we must include both inorganic and organic evolution. The subject is not of recent date. We have references to organic evolution that take us back several centuries beyond the beginning of the Christian era.

But what is evolution? Here is the difficult point. We must distinguish between evolution as a process of development and operation and the various theories of explanation of evolution. There are several such theories. And the advocates of evolution do not agree in their explanations. Darwin's name is generally associated with evolution, perhaps often without any discrimination whatever. But it must be borne in mind that Darwin only offered a theory of explanation. To what extent this theory can be accepted is an entirely different subject.

After the publication in 1859 of Darwin's book, *Origin of Species,* the opposition to evolution was strong. But that subject we need not consider here. The situation, however, has changed. And there are no indications that the Christian religion is going to

suffer any harm. It is possible that it suffered in connection with the struggle in the last century. But we cannot be certain about this. It, of course, depends on what we include in some of the concepts involved.

But while we realize that there has been, and perhaps is yet, a controversy between the Christian religion and evolution, we must also realize that it was to a great extent unjustified. Defenders of evolution engaged too much in interpretation and carried their theories too far. They entered territory where they as scientists had no right to enter. On the other hand, religion evidently gave too much attention to some of its formal aspects and became more concerned about certain conceptions than about its real life. Evolution as science can, of course, never prove that there is no God. And religion need have no fear. If evolution as such is true, then religion will perhaps take it to mean that it is the manner in which God operates. And in course of time religion will have assumed the proper attitude also in relation to evolution.

There is still another large branch of knowledge. It is the department of philosophy. But what is philosophy? Without thinking about definitions now, we may say that it is reasoning or thinking for the purpose of attaining the truth. There is, of course, a relation between reason and religion even if it is diffi-

cult to decide exactly in every case what the nature of it is. It is a subject that has received much attention. It has been approached from different points of view and dealt with in various ways.

Then we have the question as to what can be accomplished by reason. How far can it carry us? A little consideration shows us that it has carried us along more than one line of development. And now we will briefly note these lines of development.

Reason has started out with what must be called preconceived opinions against religion. And in terms of what is referred to as scientific thinking it has ruled out most of the important contents of the Christian religion. Miracles have been denied. The religious experience has been explained away. The intellectual reliability of the New Testament writers has been questioned. Immortality has been ridiculed. And the existence of God has been questioned if not denied. The position of David Hume with reference to miracles is well known. He found it easier to believe that the story of the miracles was false than that the miracle was true. A miracle was both impossible and incredible. Hume's argument, or something similar to it, one can, of course, meet also at the present time.

With others, reason has not developed along quite so radical lines. There may be room for some kind

of religious experience. And the category of God may be included in the system. But that does not mean that we have an equivalent of the Christian religion. Theism, Pantheism and Deism all have the category of God. But there is a difference. It is not in every case the God whom Jesus Christ proclaimed.

These two lines of development seem to indicate two types of thinking. It might perhaps be possible to place them both in one category if we were attempting to make a system. But with these results Christianity cannot be satisfied. Reason must then continue its work along another line. It seems then that we have a third type of thinking or another category.

It is, of course, impossible to keep the contents of our religion away from reason. Reason will naturally deal with them. It handles them. Now I do not think we can say that reason explains the contents of our Christian religion. It, of course, depends on what we mean by explaining. But we can say that it defends them. It explains both their possibility and their plausibility. It removes the obstacles to their acceptance even if it does not prove in terms of so-called scientific reasoning.

But must we now conclude that this third type of reasoning is not clear, critical and correct thinking since it accepts the contents of Christianity? We must claim that it is both clear, critical and correct.

Or must it be said that there are two kinds of truth and that a splitting of the personality is involved when one becomes a Christian? We would deny that. There is another explanation, I think. We must consider the premises and the conclusion. We can have no more in the conclusion than we have in the premises. If we start out with premises implying that only facts of positive science can be accepted, then our conclusion will be against the supernatural. But if we start out with the premises of an open and unprejudiced mind, then our conclusion will be entirely different. It makes no difference what we call this kind of reasoning. We might perhaps call it religious reason. Some might call it regenerated reason. But there would be more objection to that term.

Now we can say that there may be conflict between reason and religion. But we also have to say that the conflict is due to the fact that reason is prejudiced at the outset. When the prejudice is removed, harmony between the two may be established.

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

STREETER: Reality
BAZZONI: Energy and Matter
MENZEL: Stars and Planets
SHELDON: Space, Time and Relativity
MATHEWS: The Growth of the Idea of God
EDDINGTON: The Nature of the Physical World
WHITEHEAD: Science and the Modern World

RELIGION AND KNOWLEDGE

COBERN: The New Archæological Discoveries
MILLIGAN: Here and There Among the Papyri
BURY: History of Freedom of Thought
JEANS: The Mysterious Universe
RAMSAY: The Bearing of Recent Discovery on the Trustworthiness of the New Testament
TENNANT: Philosophy of the Sciences
MCWILLIAMS: Cosmology
WHITE: A History of the Warfare of Science and Theology
KRARUP: Religionsfilosofi
BETTEX: Science and Christianity
BURR: Ecce Terra
FAIRBAIRN: The Place of Christ in Modern Theology
STRACHAN: The Authority of Christian Experience
WOOLNOUGH: Kosmos
MOFFATT: Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament
PEAKE: A Critical Introduction to the New Testament
ZAHN: Introduction to the New Testament
SCOTT: The Fourth Gospel
GARVIE: The Belovèd Disciple
STREETER: The Four Gospels
DUNCAN: St Paul's Ephesian Ministry
DEISSMANN: Light From the Ancient East
TILLETT: The Paths That Lead to God
MARTENSEN-LARSEN: Stjerneuniverset og vor Tro
DRAPER: History of the Conflict Between Religion and Science
EDDINGTON: Science and the Unseen World
HARKNESS: Conflicts in Religious Thought

CHAPTER III

Religion and Morality

I

IN LIFE itself we meet both religion and morality. To a great extent we find both of them in the same individual. Morality, however, is found to exist by itself, and no connection with true religion is claimed. Such is the situation in life as we know it now. But the observation of it leads to a consideration concerning the origin in time of these forces of life. If they did not come into existence simultaneously, we have the question of priority. Which one appeared first in history?

There is much material on the subjects of religion and ethics. But it is not all of the same value. It seems that there are always some who, with considerable prejudice against religion, are anxious to deal with the subject. However, we may say that the question has been answered quite definitely in two ways. It has been decided that morality is the basal form of life. It came into existence first, if an expression like that can be tolerated. And it has also been decided that religion was first in the consciousness of

human beings. This should perhaps be considered the general view. It is an idea that to a great extent has been taken more or less for granted. In addition to this, we can, of course, not be ignorant of the fact that there are other conceptions even if they are not formulated as theories with conclusions that approach being final and categorical.

The conclusion in favor of the priority of morality has received weighty support from what is to be accepted as arguments from history of religion. Morality is first, it is argued. And the beginnings of it can be found in the solidarity of the human race. Höffding in his *Philosophy of Religion* (pp. 287 ff.) discusses the question. And on the basis of arguments, that are supposed to be derived from history of religion, he establishes the conclusion that religion must be traced back to ethics. But over against this it must be noted that the opposite conclusion, that morality is not prior to religion, has also been drawn from history of religion. And it seems that with good reason it can be drawn. We are, however, face to face with this situation, that inside the same discipline and in the name of the same science it is possible to arrive at opposite conclusions. And we are reminded that history of religion does not definitely decide the problem for us. We have no categorical answer from this source.

But it is not only in connection with history of religion that it has been decided that morality is prior to religion. The same idea has been defended by philosophy as such. And here Höffding could be mentioned again. He arrived at this conclusion also in terms of philosophy and logic. Religion, it is claimed, leans on moral ideas. And it depends on ethics for the conception of value. Thus it is to be seen that morality was first developed.

It is not difficult to see that this conclusion presents itself quite readily to those who more or less disregard religion. There is something of a recognition of ethics and its demands upon life. And from this, one may be led to reason to its priority in life. Religion and its contents then come in as results of morality. Even Kant, in spite of his analysis, did not seem to get any closer to the subject than to establish the conclusion that morality is first.

But in the face of actual life it does not seem possible to maintain this. For if morality had once in the history of mankind issued in religion, it would seem that we should expect this to take place again. That would be the logic of the matter. But this does not always occur. On the other hand, it is often the case that, instead of issuing in religion, it issues in the opposite. It discards religion.

The other view, that religion is first, is perhaps

the most natural one. And it has been strongly defended. It seems natural for most people perhaps to reason from religion to morality. A consistency between the two is expected without any further analysis of the subject. The consistency may be justly expected. But this does not establish the priority of religion. And, as a matter of fact, if we were bound to reason from religion to morality, then it would seem that we should have to conclude that there could be no morality without religion. This, however, finds its contradiction in life itself.

It seems then that neither history nor philosophy will decide the matter for us in a categorical way. Each one decides for himself more or less and works out his own solution. And his system is built accordingly. It, of course, makes no particular difference what the actual situation is if it actually is the case that the one preceded the other in time. It seems, however, just as reasonable and valid a conclusion that the two have always existed together. In spite of the fact that some in the name of history of religion claim that the earliest and lowest forms of religion were not ethical, it seems difficult to believe that the one existed before the other. In other words, the one does not depend on the other as far as its origin in time is concerned.

We have a similar difficulty if we try to decide

which one is superior. We may say, as some have said, that ethics is in itself religious. And we may claim that morality is superior, because it is in terms of moral contents that we decide on the value of religion. In a general way there is some truth in this. But it is not a solution. For it must be borne in mind that judgments are passed on religion also in terms of science. That is one of our great difficulties in religion. But we are not willing to admit that science is superior to religion. On the other hand, it seems a very natural conclusion that religion is superior to morality. And if there is such a thing as comparing the two it seems to be a correct conclusion. But it will have to be admitted that the judgment has not been passed in terms of religion. And even if it is admitted that the moral contents come in for consideration in a judgment of this kind, it is not necessary to conclude that morality is superior to religion.

These observations seem to point to an independent coming into existence of both religion and morality. The one does not depend on the other for its appearance in history. It seems then that we must conclude that they are separate and distinct forms or spheres of human life. And we are thus reminded of the observation, briefly made in another place, that the essence of religion is not morality.

This conclusion with reference to religion and

morality seems to be the only satisfactory conclusion. If we penetrate a little into the nature of the two it seems that we cannot avoid observing that they are different. Religion is man's life with God. It can be traced back to an experience in the life of the individual. It is a part of his consciousness. Considering morality, we may easily observe that it is difficult to say in a few words what it is. That, of course, does not mean that we do not have definitions of it. But definitions do not always meet all the requirements. We may say that in morality we have to do with the motives, the attitudes and the actions involved in the relations of human beings. And then we have perhaps referred to the main characteristics. We see then that religion and morality are not only different, but they are different to such an extent that it is impossible to identify the one with the other as far as their essence and nature are concerned. That, of course, does not mean that there are no similarities. In our observation of them we find that they are similar in several respects.

They are similar, and there is a close connection between the two. This is something that must not be overlooked. It is seen in life both in morality and religion. Morality contains elements of religion even if it is not always admitted. And religion naturally involves morality and exerts in some cases a strong

influence upon it. Religion will ordinarily tend to bring about clearer and stronger and more definite conceptions in morality. It will, if it is true, emphasize the spiritual aspects of life. And it lends courage and strength to those who embrace it.

This state of affairs might perhaps not seem natural to all. Yet, I think it must be considered natural. In its final analysis it is due to the fact that man has a capacity for morality as well as for religion. Man is both a moral and a religious being. All men are in some way reminded of the divine. And all men in some way feel the presence of the moral law. Some respond only to the appeal of the moral law and disregard and reject the voice and the call of God. Others, however, not only try to conform to the demands of the moral law, but also enter into a relationship with God. In such people it is not difficult to see the inter-action of religion and morality. And it is not difficult to understand that religion is in a position to exert a great influence upon man and his moral life.

II

All human beings have a capacity for moral action and perceive in some way a moral law. It would be vain to begin to dispute this, it seems. But it will have to be admitted that it must be understood in a general and broad sense. We need only think of the

different periods of history and the different civilizations and the various conceptions from time to time to be reminded of this. But men have at all times been face to face with the problem of right and wrong. And there have always been right motives and actions and wrong motives and actions. The same problems have, however, not been decided upon in the same way as life has progressed and times have changed.

That introduces us to the problem concerning the ethical norm. What is the moral standard? This question has always been answered in different ways. And it seems that one is justified in thinking that it always will be. Philosophical ethics has solved the problem in various ways. The result of the efforts has been references to happiness or duty or perfection as the moral standard. Theological ethics will perhaps ordinarily arrive at the conclusion that the will of God is the ethical norm. It is also possible to refer to the mind or the will of Christ as the moral standard. And it should be plain that this does not involve us in any contradiction. The meaning is really in its final analysis the same.

Höffding in his *Ethics* (pp. 13 ff.) has taken the opportunity to criticize theological ethics and its reference to the will of God as the ethical norm. Theological ethics, in his opinion, is a decided contrast to

philosophical ethics. It does not recognize the method of historical investigation. It abides by tradition and emphasizes revelation, which is of such a nature that nothing can be explained by reference to the laws of the various sciences, such as psychology and sociology. It is ethics that builds on the principle of authority. And it is the authority that goes back to an ideal that is revealed in a supernatural way. The will of God is the ideal, the authority. But that means that theological ethics must finally depend on the church because it guards revelation and tradition. And if it does not do that, but tries to determine the will of God subjectively, then, in his opinion, it has passed from theology to psychology.

This is only one of the many instances of this writer's attacks upon theology and the Christian religion. We cannot say that he knew nothing about religion. Nevertheless there is something to remind us both of his lack of understanding and interpretation and of his prejudice as far as the Christian religion is concerned. It is not correct to say that theology disregards the method of historical investigation and pays no attention to the other disciplines of learning. This is not theology of the present time. And while it is true that Christianity considers the will of God the moral standard, the will of God is not conceived of as a piece of legislation with sections

and paragraphs and references to all phases of life stated in detail. And when reference is made to the subjective, it is not a turning away from theology to psychology. It is still theology, even if psychology may have to come in for consideration in an analysis of the subject.

The will of God must in spite of all criticism, it seems, still be considered the best possible solution as far as the moral standard is concerned. But we must remember that we have both an objective and a subjective aspect to consider. The will of God exists objectively. But we cannot psychologically speak about knowing it until we know it subjectively. We must be convinced in our own mind. It must be a part of our consciousness. And if we admit the possibility and the reality of the contents of the religious consciousness and believe that man may come in contact with God, we should have no difficulty in admitting that man may know something of the will of God in his moral consciousness.

Proceeding along this line of thinking, we can perhaps say that the moral standard *per se* is the same whether we consider it in philosophical or in theological ethics. This will perhaps not ordinarily be admitted by philosophical ethics. But it may be true, nevertheless. If a disbeliever decides that he will and must be true and honest in all his business, he is de-

ciding the same as a Christian believer would decide. And the moral standard is the same, even if it is not referred to by the same name. If dishonesty, however, is practiced in business, it cannot be considered morally right even if it may be defended by some kind of ethics.

The objection to authority in morals is strong with many. But it is perhaps more apparent than real. It all depends on what we mean by it. There will always be authority of some kind, whether it is admitted or not. If one in connection with his moral life tries to determine what happiness is, happiness poses as the authority for that person. He tries to have his actions determined by happiness which is to be realized in life. He may, however, object to references to it as an authority. But, nevertheless, it is something the requirements of which he tries to meet. It is his standard even if it passes through his own consciousness and is part of it.

In referring to the moral law, we have already indicated that we must be careful and not speak categorically as far as details are concerned. And when we speak about the will of God as the moral standard, we must make a similar consideration. It must be admitted that the subject concerning the will of God is both comprehensive and difficult. The logic of it, it seems to me, forces the conclusion upon us

that the will of God in itself is always the same. It remains unchanged and stands for the same. Its aim is that which is right and good. But the contents of life change from time to time. And the will of God, even if it does not change, may be realized in a different way. It seems then that we have to make a distinction between the essential or intentional and the formal aspects of the will of God. The intention is always the same. But the formal aspects may change.

This can be seen in life. If we refer to the great apostle Paul, we find that it happened in his life. He has himself referred to his life before his conversion to Christianity. He was a strict Pharisee. And he says, "As touching zeal, persecuting the church; as touching the righteousness which is in the law, found blameless." He says in another place that his violence was due to his ignorance. And now we may perhaps say that the change was brought about when he became a Christian. And it is true. But it is not all that can be said. Paul was a religious man and tried seriously to be very moral also before his conversion. But after his conversion he came to have different conceptions of the will of God and morality. This, of course, does not in any way exclude references to considerations concerning the influence of the Jewish religion in his moral life.

We may consider other things. We may, for in-

stance, take Paul's instruction concerning the conduct and apparel of women. Some of it may perhaps still be morally correct. But on the other hand, we must be careful and avoid being categorical. These instructions were formulated with the conditions of the times as a background. And there may be other ways in which the moral character of women must be manifested today. Again, we may take a subject like slavery. It seems that Paul was able to harmonize that with Christianity and the will of God. But most people at the present time would perhaps have difficulty in this respect, if they would not find it impossible.

It seems then that we cannot escape the observation that changes take place in connection with moral life and its standard. The will of God does not change in its intention or essence. But there may be a change with reference to the formal expression of it.

III

We have now briefly considered religion and morality. We have come to the conclusion that they are distinct forms of life. And we have placed them in separate categories. But there is nevertheless a close connection between the two. And we often see the two spheres in the same person. Furthermore, morality can ultimately be satisfied with no other

standard than the will of God. Realizing this, we can easily see that we are face to face with various problems in life. For the serious person they will turn up in different connections.

There is for one thing the danger of having wrong standards in morality, or lowering the correct one. This is not something that belongs only to an abstract consideration. It is a part of actual life. And the danger is perhaps greater than many realize and would be willing to admit. And both the individual and society are guilty in this respect. One does not need to be a pessimist to be able to see that much which was formerly condemned is now meeting with approval. According to the opinion of some, we have in several countries now a condition that approaches moral disintegration. Without question there is a laxity in morals. In some cases it has perhaps even gone so far that men not only do what is wrong, but they also honor it.

It is not easy to point to all the factors that have entered in as causes in bringing about such conditions. Some of them belong to society as such and cannot be traced to a single individual. In some cases they have sprung up in spite of the opposition of many. We may, for instance, think of the horrible war that broke out in 1914. To this tragedy of blood and fire many of the present degraded moral conditions must

be ascribed. Not only did the morals of many young men collapse. But many young women suffered a similar degradation. And then we might mention the materialistic civilization of which we are so much reminded now. With a strong emphasis on the material aspects and contents of life there is apt to be a lowering of the high standard of moral life. And from what I have read I have been led to think that some of the nobler and more elevated conceptions of morality have in some cases been sacrificed on the altar of sport.

And then there is one thing more that might be mentioned in this connection. It is the general pressure which so often emanates from society. This pressure is generally powerful. And many individuals have difficulty in withstanding it and consequently submit to it and become followers of the great majority. But this pressure is also very often wrong. And the result is a lowering of the moral standard. Right and justice are suffering. There is nevertheless a strong temptation to yield to this pressure. But it is dangerous. It was Henrik Ibsen who referred to Satan in pointing out the danger of compromise. And if we are serious and true we can perhaps not express it much better to-day.

There is another danger. We might refer to it as the danger of substituting morality for religion.

Much energy has been spent, and many efforts have been put forth in this kind of undertakings. It has perhaps not always been the intention. But the endeavors have resulted in this. The contents of the one have come to take the place of the contents of the other. Instead of God, humanity has been placed on the throne. And the endeavors in the interest of humanity have taken the place of worship. As far as the externals are concerned, morality has entered in and occupied the place of religion. In this connection it is not difficult to come to think of Comte and Positivism and the emphasis on sociology and social service. And one can understand that some can be prompted to say that Comte established a new religion. And in the broad sense of the term it is, of course, a religion. But it is a religion without God.

We need, however, not go back to Comte to meet this kind of endeavors. Life is, so to speak, full of them. At the present time we are vividly reminded of the non-theistic form of humanism and its activities. In addition to these there are many other endeavors and activities. And some of them seem to originate in places from which we with good reason could expect something of a different character. What the results will eventually be we are unable to say. We can only wonder. But we can understand the

anxiety and fear of those who think seriously about life and its contents.

Such conditions are ultimately due to a misunderstanding of the nature and essence of religion. Where true religion prevails they could not exist. But when religion loses its true characteristics and man no longer feels its reality, then we can begin to look for the initial stages in a downward trend. If religion fails to be true to its inner nature it is in danger of being swallowed up. It is lost in the terrible strife. And something else takes its place.

Conditions of this kind may be found in individuals and in society in general. But in a final analysis they must be traced back to the church. And it is a sad fact, which we cannot escape, that they are found inside that great institution which we refer to as the church of God. The church is forgetting its calling and function. And programs of various descriptions are coming in. And religion is in many cases looking for a place to stand. But we must be aware of the danger while it is time.

We are not now intending to minimize the importance of morality. On the other hand, we need a strong emphasis on the importance of better moral conditions. And we can readily admit that many of these endeavors have been beneficial to mankind. But we must realize that they do not, and cannot, satisfy

the longings of the human heart and give it peace. That only true religion can do. And the efforts of morality along these lines must be considered futile and unsuccessful. Ethics cannot take the place of religion. If it attempts to do so, it violates its own nature and enters foreign territory. And it fails to point to God as a living reality.

We must remember then that religion and morality are two distinct spheres of life. Each one is important. But morality cannot take the place of religion. It cannot meet the demands of the religious disposition. Religion must therefore be on its guard. It must be true to itself. And the church must be true to religion and to God.

IV

Facing conditions of such a nature, we can readily see, I think, that we need help of some kind. But that is speaking about it in a very general way. It is, as a matter of fact, much easier to refer to this in a general way than to point to definite remedies. It might perhaps be suggested that we should have bigger and better programs of teaching morality in the church. And revivals or even reformation in the church might be mentioned. But leaving this comprehensive subject and trying to confine ourselves to mere essentials, we might perhaps say that we need a deepening and refining of our moral and our religious life.

If we emphasize the teaching of morality in the schools in general, as some books on subjects of sociology do, we have the problem with reference to qualified teachers. Not everybody, who has gone through a textbook on ethics and has a degree, could be considered qualified to teach the subject. We may admit that some value would be derived from such teaching. But a good share of it might not be much more than legality. And in some cases there might be only etiquette. In the teaching of religion in school and church there might be similar problems.

When we speak about a deepening of our moral and religious life we may, of course, admit that it is difficult. But we must nevertheless make attempts along this line. A process of this kind will yield its rich results. If we take some of the virtues like truth and justice and honesty and examine them and try to find out what they mean and consider to what extent they may be applied in life, we shall have a deeper understanding of moral life. But on the other hand, we yield to a tendency to be superficial and pragmatic in our ways of thinking and acting. And justice and truth may perhaps be scattered to the winds if we can derive personal advantages. In connection with religion something similar might be said. The religious person will be a better person if he takes time for analysis and consideration and tries to find out

more about the deeper things of his religion and of life.

And I think if more of this deepening and refining is to be accomplished we must turn to the church. We have a right to expect that the church should help in this. And if it is what it should be, it can help. If it, however, has lost its power and become a mere organization, we must expect that by the grace of God it may be stirred up to life. For the church that is living there is a big task both in religion and in morality.

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

Jevons: Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion
Peabody: Jesus Christ and the Christian Character
Temple: Christian Faith and Life
Höffding: Etik
Bennett: A Philosophical Study of Mysticism
Manson: The Teaching of Jesus
Höffding: Religionsfilosofi
Raymond: Ethics and Natural Law
Calderwood: Hand-book of Moral Philosophy
Drake: Problems of Conduct
Wright: Self-Realization
Mackenzie: Manual of Ethics
Sharp: Ethics
Bowne: Principles of Ethics
Kingdon: Humane Religion
Smyth: Christian Ethics
Luthardt: The Moral Truths of Christianity
Horton: The Mystical Quest of Christ

CHAPTER IV

Religion and Worship

THERE is a very close relationship between religion and worship. There can be no religion without worship of some kind. For worship is in itself a communion between God and man. We may speak about worship as individual and social or as private and public. But many of the elements of worship are common to both forms. Here, however, it is not the aim to outline the subject nor discuss all the elements as such. But we may speak about it in connection with the individual and in connection with the church. For the individual does come in for consideration, and so does the church. The individual is, of course, involved in both cases. And the elements are to a great extent the same. But there is a distinction.

I

In the religious life of the individual, prayer is an important element. There may perhaps be races or tribes concerning which it is not known definitely that they engage in prayer. But in the Christian religion the individual believer makes use of prayer.

It is difficult, if not impossible, to see how a person could be a Christian if he does not make use of prayer. For Christianity is a relation to God.

Without in any way modifying the consideration already made, that religion must be traced back to the individual experience, we can say that prayer is closely associated with the beginning of religion. This is not anything new or strange. And the idea has been referred to in various ways. Prayer has been considered prominent and important in connection with the initial stages of religion. But that need not involve a contradiction of what has already been considered. For prayer and the religious experience are intimately connected and may, perhaps, even merge in one. This is true also in Christianity.

Prayer is an activity on the part of man. In prayer the individual makes an attempt to enter into the presence of the divine and pour out his heart before God. The experience along this line will, of course, not be the same in every case. It depends on the person who prays, the contents of his prayer, and the circumstances under which he prays. But the person, who is true in his prayer, is conscious of entering in before the presence of God. Prayer is thus seen to be a transcending of the boundaries of this life and this world. This understanding of it is involved when

Bishop Martensen speaks of it as a phase of mystical love (*Christian Ethics,* Vol. 2).

While prayer may develop into a true mystical experience and become a kind of passive state in which no words and perhaps no thoughts are involved, it ordinarily starts with words or at any rate formulated thoughts. But these as such do not constitute prayer. A formulated prayer may be used. But there may not be prayer in the true sense of the term. It is a question of spirit and truth. Formal prayers, which have been worded by others at different times, may be true and beautiful and good. But the mere repetition of such prayers is not true prayer. Here it is a problem of entering into the original spirit of the prayer and of making it live again. It is not difficult to see that here is room for much deception. For while there may be prayer as far as the formal aspects are concerned, there may not be prayer in reality. The formal prayers of the church are, of course, involved here. But to what extent the reality is lacking in the different cases is not easily determined. Perhaps it would be more correct to say that it is impossible to speak definitely in such cases. Prayer, then, ordinarily makes use of words and thoughts in its expression. But it ultimately depends on the personality.

In a consideration of the contents of prayer, one

finds himself face to face with a wide range. Even that which constitutes more direct objects, is a very comprehensive class. For it includes both God and humanity and the various contents of life.

God himself may be the object of prayer. The person who prays may, perhaps, not state it in so many words. But his thoughts center about God as the central object. There is an attempt to experience God and to know more about the things that belong to God and his kingdom. Prayer of this kind will, perhaps more easily than some of the other kinds, sink into the mystical experience. Prayer, it is true, is one path that leads to God. That has been brought out time and again, also in our own time.

The person who prays may himself be the object of the prayer. He places himself and his problems before God. There might be something in such a prayer that would approach the selfish and unethical. But it would have to be remarked that that might be the case in any kind of prayer. On the other hand, such a prayer might be decidedly true and very sincere. The person who is honest and true and sincere will find much in his own person and life that he wants to place before God. And here may be included the most ethical and religious problems that the Christian faces in life continually. We might, perhaps, even say that there might be danger of super-

ficiality and unreality if one does not make the problems of his life the object of his prayer.

Other persons may also be the object of one's prayer. Thus we have intercession. True religion embraces humanity. And the true Christian in his love and interest includes others in his prayers. No person in human society lives or should live for himself. And that is especially true of the Christian. It is only a mark of a warped Christianity if there is no interest in others.

Finally it may be said that the various contents of life may be the object of prayer. Here perhaps more than any other place one meets with difficulty. And objections will be raised from various directions. It is, however, a matter of fact that Christians in all ages have included these various things in their prayers. And Paul said, "In nothing be anxious; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God."

In connection with the consideration of this form of prayers there is room for a reference to the objections that have been raised. They have come from more than one source and been referred to in various ways.

Some of the objections come from science and philosophy. The argument is brought in that established natural laws prevail in nature and life. Prayer,

then, can accomplish nothing, for natural laws do not change and cannot be changed. The objections, however, are not so serious as some would like to think. We are all willing to admit that natural laws exist. But where is the satisfactory definition of natural laws? Health and disease, for instance, are both governed by natural laws. But the one is in opposition to the other. There is a contradiction in life. But that is not all. When reference is made to natural laws, science is apt to identify these with God. The universe and God are identified, and we have pantheism and monism. But science cannot speak as science here. And the Christian believer does not accept that interpretation. If we believe that one law may operate in opposition to another if the sick person is to become well, we may also believe that God can operate. In terms of science and natural laws the reference may be to the physician and medicine. But for the Christian believer it may be God that operates through a certain law. Or we may say that God caused the particular law to operate. In addition to that we may just be reminded that the Christian religion does not exclude miracles. How they are explained in every detail is another problem. We meet again, in other words, the problem of natural laws and contradictions in life.

Other objections come from religion itself. The

religious mind, feeling that God is perfect love, reasons this way that God knows what is best and governs nature and humanity according to his own will and for the best. Consequently prayer is not necessary and cannot accomplish anything. The true believer is passive, depends on God and submits to his will. Here is something which at first might look like a perfected form of Christianity. And we have, of course, to be careful in passing judgment. But on the other hand we must realize that this attitude would involve the conviction that all the evils in life and all the misfortunes are directly or indirectly from God. While it may be admitted that God can make use of an accident, for instance, it does not necessarily mean that God caused the accident to happen. We must make a distinction between the permissive and the directing will of God. The person who believes in God as a personal God cannot, then, hesitate to pray about the various contents of life. And Christ taught us to pray not only for daily bread, but also that we might be delivered from the evil.

This problem in connection with prayers of request has received many solutions. But no one is satisfactory to all. And I suppose we shall ever look in vain for such a solution. Before the face of God we must try to do the best we can. And each one

must more or less determine for himself how much he can bring before God in prayer. But we must never forget that there are great promises in connection with prayer. And history has fine examples of people who have prayed to God and obtained great results. These things are facts in the history of living faith. And we cannot dispute them. Our explanation may vary with the different cases. But we must observe that a mere emphasis on natural laws does not do away with facts.

Before we leave the subject of prayer we might also be reminded that there are other forms of prayer. We have, for instance, confession, thanksgiving and praise. These forms of prayer are by no means the least important. The true pious person cannot do without them. And we may say that they are indicative of a person's right relation to God. As a person develops in knowledge of himself and God and his kingdom he will feel the desire to confess because of the terrible shortcomings and inconsistencies in his life. And as he realizes the lasting love and the abundant grace of God, he will be moved to thanksgiving and praise.

Closely connected with worship, if not exactly a phase of it in every detail, is what we may call meditation. But how shall we define or describe meditation? It is a subject that has received much attention

and been dealt with in various ways. But I think we may say that it is reflection or thinking things over. I am not now referring to the thinking in which only people with trained minds can engage. We also have the general thinking which people in all walks of life can do. It is the simple art of being quiet and taking time to collect one's thoughts for the purpose of coming to conclusions and obtaining results. Religious meditation will deal not only with God and his kingdom, but also with life in general and its contents.

Now, it is not the intention to repeat what was briefly said with reference to the deepening and refining of the moral life. But a few remarks may be made. Such general quiet thinking has its beneficial results. It will act as a kind of balance wheel. And there will be more insight and a deeper understanding of the contents of life. Conceptions of sin and dependence will be more developed. And there will be a deeper sense of gratitude. In a general way, there will be something that approaches an integration of the personality. I do not mean that a system of philosophy will be worked out. There may be no technical understanding of philosophy whatever. But there may, nevertheless, have been a process of integration. It must, however, be admitted that an integrated personality is not easily obtained. Even the person with a trained mind may not be through with

the process. And he may even deceive himself in this respect. But even if nothing perfect is produced, meditation will, nevertheless, help the spirit of worship.

There has, perhaps, always been a perceptible lack of this attitude and spirit. And in our own age I think the complaint in this connection is just. We live in a materialistic and superficial age. The great problems have to a large extent been problems of property and entertainment. As in the days of Rome, many people have been thinking mainly about bread and show. There has not been much meditation. The spirit of the age has been too strong. We need the simple, plain, quiet thinking. And the church in certain sections is beginning to feel it. And when people again take time to meditate, there will be better and more true worship.

II

In a consideration of worship it is difficult to avoid being reminded of the church. There is a close connection between religion and the church. Man is a social being. But that is not all. Religion is of such a nature that it brings people of the same spirit together. Religion acts in society. Thus, in a general way, the church as a visible external organization has come into existence. And thus naturally there has at all times been an intimate relation between the

Christian church and worship. In other words, we have the social or public worship in connection with the church as an institution.

Public worship has taken on various forms in the different ages of the history of the church. These formal aspects are due to various factors such as the nature of the people embracing the religion, their environment, education, and other things. Social worship, then, receives its form from those who worship together and are interested in creating it. In Germany at the present time there is a new interest among Protestants to modify or reform the formal aspects of worship in the church.* There would naturally be various views inside of such a movement. And this is the case in Germany. The emphasis is placed on various things. Some of them favor a form of worship which, in their opinion, should create a deeper sense of the presence of God. This form involves new prayers and new hymns, and provision for silent worship. Rudolf Otto belongs to this group. And it is not difficult to understand that he, with his deep sense of the mysterious and the divine, would be among these. In fact he may be considered their leader.

If we were to make an attempt to determine the value of the various forms of social worship we

*Written prior to the present ecclesiastical developments in Germany.

should have to make a number of considerations. However, without considering that our object, we might consider a few things.

Religion is something that is decidedly practical in its nature. And it seems that there must be something in the service that can appeal to actual practical life. The individual must be able to find something to which his heart can respond. But now the question is if other elements have received too much attention. There is a possibility that one may receive the impression that teaching and theory are more important than the religious life itself.

Closely related to this is the question if the worship expresses the religion of the heart. In some cases there might, perhaps, seem to be too much to remind of the authority of the church as an external institution. And some might have a feeling that too much emphasis is placed upon the dogmas and the liturgy. And it may, of course, actually be the case. And religion may be suffering, and people may be suffering.

Finally it may be said in a general way that the public worship should be of such a character that it reminds of God and his kingdom. But it is, of course, easier to come to this conclusion than to realize it in actual life as far as all the details of the service are

concerned. The church also in this connection is face to face with a big problem.

But this has had reference only to the objective aspect of the service. And I think we are safe in saying that the last word on the subject will never be spoken. For in a subject of this kind the subjective aspect is extremely important. To realize this we need only bear in mind that the same service may be attractive and pleasing and religious to the one person and displeasing and repelling and merely formal to the other. It is the individual religious personality that asserts itself in such cases. And the advocates of the various forms of public service must be reminded that they cannot speak categorically in this matter. For the other person may be just as religious, if not more, and his opinion and conviction must also be respected. That, however, does not do away with tests of the value of social worship. It is only this, that we do not all give the same things the same interpretation. Certain things will, of course, be eliminated from time to time, and other things will be introduced. But the worship in the church must be religious. Religion itself makes that demand.

So far the reference has been to the service in general. And no attempt has been made to single out anything for special consideration. In the Protestant

churches, however, preaching still occupies a prominent place. The sermon is as yet an important part of the service. And it seems that a special reference to it can be defended. We may, then, consider the sermon briefly, I think, without repeating anything that has been said in the general observations.

The sermon, then, enters in as a part of the public worship in the church. But now there is a question as to how we are to conceive of it if it is to be worship in the proper sense, or a part of social worship. May we speak about a criterion in this connection? Or have we tests that can be applied? Here, of course, it is possible to say quite a number of things. It is, however, not so easy to say that which will meet with the approval of all. But we must bear in mind that the Christian religion is still in possession of life and authority and power. And it still speaks even if it is not always heard and obeyed.

Here would be ample room for references to the many voices that have been heard in recent years concerning the subject of preaching. It is a subject that has received much attention in our time. And it must be admitted that many valuable contributions have appeared. But on the other hand, I cannot refrain from thinking that in many cases there is a manifest lack of understanding of the Christian religion. And in some cases, it seems to me, there is even

a lack of historical understanding. And if that is the case, the material will not help the preaching in the Christian church. We will, of course, gladly admit that there is continuously room for change and improvement. But such change must not jeopardize the distinct message of the Christian religion. And we can say that there are certain things which Christianity insists on as a part of the message of the church if there is to be true worship.

For one thing, the call to the impenitent must be heard in the sermon. There must be reminders of sin and repentance and conversion. Christian believers are people who have seen the reality of sin and have entered into a new life. And there are still many who live away from the kingdom of God. But some of them might possibly enter that kingdom if they heard the calling voice. Therefore, the Christian religion insists on this as a feature of its message.

Then there must be the strengthening of the weak. And there must be encouragement and consolation for the despondent and afflicted. The Christian believer, as well as others, may be frail. And times and conditions may be difficult and trying. History reminds us of this time and again. But Christianity knows God as a God of strength and consolation. And believers are justified in looking for something of this kind in the message from God.

And finally we can say there must be that which in general ministers to the life of the believer. There must be something that edifies. And there must be reminders of sanctification and help to sanctification. Christians are human beings and live under human conditions. And their Christian life must be sustained. They need spiritual food.

This, of course, does not mean that doctrinal, historical, and other specific kinds of sermons must be excluded. In some cases such sermons may even be needed. And as a matter of fact, strong spiritual sermons of these various kinds have often been preached. Doctrine and history may be vehicles to convey the contents which the believers may demand. I think it is possible to say this much in favor of these kinds of sermons in spite of the opposition that is voiced against them in some books. But it is, of course, not the same as saying that dogmas can be identified with Christianity.

We are, however, forced to admit that we do not always find the proper and required contents in the message of the church. It must be considered a sad state of affairs. But it is a fact which we cannot escape. It is, perhaps, not easy to make a correct analysis in every detail and find all the factors which enter in as causes in bringing about this situation. But I think it is possible to point to a few things.

In the first place one must point to the minister. There are apparently ministers who are not true servants of the church of the living God. One is inclined to think of them as hirelings. Such men, it seems, have little or no knowledge of Christianity as living and real. And consequently their message does not contain that which the Christian religion demands. There may be philosophy or something that approaches it. There may be morality or politics. And there may even be teachings of theology. But a message from God to the fallen race the minister does not bring because he has not experienced anything with God. He must speak about other things. A number of years ago Jowett (*The Preacher, His Life and Work,* p. 78) made the observation that ministers were discussing subjects which would not have been introduced some years before. We could not say anything better about many ministers to-day.

Then I think we may observe now and then that pressure is being brought to bear on the minister by people in the congregation, or even by some outside it. Their voice is heard. There is opposition to certain things. The subject of sin and frivolity, for instance, is disliked by many. Now we must be careful in passing judgment on the minister. But we know that the spirit of accommodation is strong in our day. And there is a temptation to yield to it. The true pastor

will have a problem in deciding what his attitude is to be in the different situations. But there may be so much accommodation that the character of the message of the church is no longer determined by the Christian religion, but by something else.

There is one more thing which I like to mention in this connection. We live in an age which might be called a machine-age. Many have a mechanistic interpretation of life. And machinery of various kinds has been introduced into all departments of life. It has also to a great extent come into the church. In some cases, if not in many, it seems that we have an over-organized church with several departments and with clubs, societies, associations and circles in each department. Now it may readily be admitted that organization may be necessary and beneficial. But we must bear in mind that machinery needs power and consumes power. It may happen then that the machinery is in working order, but there is no power. There may be references to the various organizations, but the spiritual power is wanting. And there is danger that the Christian religion will look in vain for a spiritual message.

It is the spirit of worship that we must not forget. The Christian is thinking about worship also in connection with the sermon. And he looks for certain things in the message from the church. There are

requirements that must be satisfied if the Christian religion is to feel the spirit of worship.

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

Jevons: Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion
Martensen: Den Christelige Ethik
Anson: A Practical Faith
Jowett: The Preacher, His Life and Work
Puglisi: Prayer
Loy: Christian Prayer
Monrad: Fra Bönnens Verden
Hodge: Prayer and Its Psychology
Inge: Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion
Heiler: Prayer
Byington: Pulpit Mirrors
Maclaren: The Cure of Souls
Harris: Christian Public Worship

CHAPTER V

Religion and Practical Life

RELIGION must naturally receive a theoretical and philosophical treatment when it is dealt with as a subject. There may, however, be quite a variation in this respect. But religion as such is practical. It is a practical relation of life. And one should not claim personal and intimate knowledge of it if he is not aware of this. Religion is then known in a practical way in connection with life. It is not merely embraced by the individual in a practical way. But one will meet it in connection with the various contents of life. And he may make use of it as he faces these contents. Thus he will experience the practical benefits and blessings. Then further, as he becomes religious, he will not be able to escape the challenge of the religious moral standard in life.

I

Life to the general practical observation presents itself in terms of its contents, both material and spiritual in nature. Some of these contents again may be considered forces which the human minds meet and recognize through their appeals. There is also

here, then, a process of action and reaction. It is possible to refer to these forces in various ways. Some of them may be said to be elevated and noble and pure in character. And if man reacts to them in the right way, the result will be for his benefit. Others, however, are of an entirely different description. We may make use of symbols and illustrations in attempting to describe them. Martensen, in his *Christian Ethics,* refers to the three beasts which met Dante as he stood at the foot of the mountain before the entrance to the Inferno. These three animals, the panther, the lion and the wolf, are generally taken to represent pleasure or sensuality, arrogance or ambition, and avarice. Now these forces with their terrible and powerful appeals are evidently entirely different from those first described. And their effect upon man is entirely different.

It is possible to assume various attitudes with reference to these forces. There may be approval or disapproval. There may be submission or opposition or rejection. With reference to that which is good one may feel that he is unable to reach the ideal and satisfy all conditions. And with reference to the wicked and degrading forces one may feel, in case he submits, that certain laws have been violated and that he is guilty.

This amounts perhaps only to a general moral

consideration. The person with some understanding of morality would admit the difference in the contents of life and would be conscious of the fact that various attitudes may be assumed with reference to them. Some general knowledge as far as inability to reach the ideal is concerned might also be found. And if there is a violation of certain laws it would perhaps in most cases not be disputed. All this would especially be found to be the case if the investigation were confined to a consideration of the civil laws without any attempt to determine definitely the concept of moral laws.

But the sensitive consciousness does not rest at this point. It penetrates further into the subject; if not in a philosophical, then in a practical way. Here we are reminded of the mystical practical knowledge. It will be realized that man is involved in a relation not only to humanity, but to God. Man has to do, not only with the will of society in general as it is expressed in laws, but with the will of God. He cannot leave that out of consideration. It is only when we consider man in relation to God, and his terrible shortcomings in realizing the will of God and the terrible guilt involved in violating it, that we begin to have something of an understanding of what sin is. Sin must, like certain other things, be looked at in the light of eternity. With the acquisition of some of

this knowledge, man begins to realize what a terrible element of disturbance sin is.

In the New Testament similar views are brought out. The religious consciousness has expressed itself on the subject. And several terms have been employed to elucidate on the various phases of the idea. A term of general meaning is ἀνομία. Under this idea of lawlessness may perhaps be found two other shades of meaning conveyed by the terms ἀδικία, injustice, and ἀσέβεια, ungodliness. Then there is the word ἁμαρτία which means missing the aim or the mark. And finally there is the word παράβασις in which we have the idea of transgression. In addition to this we should also bear in mind that similar or identical ideas are conveyed in the Old Testament. The employment of these words then shows us that the religious mind of those remote times was conscious of these various stages or positions in man's relation to God.

Such a relation between man and God can, of course, not be confined to a consideration of the external acts only. When man considers his relation to society and the civil laws, it is mainly his external acts that come in for consideration. But in a deeper and more comprehensive relation, man's life cannot be considered limited to the external acts. For while it is true that personality to a great extent is mani-

fested in the external activity, it is not always the case. There are other manifestations of the personality. Consequently, in man's relation to God both thinking and speaking and acting are involved.

Furthermore, it seems plain that in such a general relation the entire humanity will necessarily have to be placed in the same category. All men must be considered involved in some relation to God and his will whether they realize and admit it or not. All men are implicated in this terrible disturbance of life. All men are sinners when their relation to God is considered. It was not only Paul who came to the conclusion that all men have sinned. Others have passed the same judgment. Seneca's conclusion contained the very same verdict. And that is not all. Down through the course of history, people in all ages and under various circumstances have come to that same conclusion.

Any reference to sin is apt to meet with opposition from some source. This appears especially to be true at the present time. Arguments of opposition are brought in along various lines of thinking. They come from philosophy, from psychology and from anthropology. And if we were engaged in an investigation of the origin, essence and nature of sin, there would be ample opportunity to deal with these opposing arguments. In a general way, however, I think

we can say that we are willing to accept everything that comes from these sources and can be demonstrated to be actual true knowledge and not hypothesis. But on the other hand, I also think we must say that neither philosophy nor psychology nor science can say the last word in this matter. In a psychological laboratory, for instance, it is possible to investigate instincts and motives and tendencies and other things. But that does not mean that psychology as such will be able to pass a judgment against the reality of sin. A judgment against the reality of sin can no more be accepted, it seems, than a judgment against the reality of God. The difficulty here involved is not a new one. It has directly or indirectly been referred to before in other connections. It is well to bear in mind that distinctions exist inside of that which the human personality can appropriate and incorporate. Some of this material is treated and accounted for more or less adequately by philosophy. But some of it, while it receives its formal treatment from philosophy, must for its validity and authority be referred to the verdict of the religious consciousness.

This element of disturbance is then a part of the contents of life as we know it. There is not in every case the same amount of knowledge of it. It is not accounted for and classified in the same way by all.

But its reality cannot be denied. With consciousness of its implication in a relation to God, however, man has come to see a new aspect of it and will place it in a new category. And when man comes to God and seeks to establish a relation with him, he comes with a knowledge of his sin. Consciousness of sin and consciousness of God seem to belong closely together.

But man's knowledge of sin does not come to a close with his coming to God. When his relation to God has been established, a new situation has been brought about in every respect. But sin remains in life and in the consciousness of the believer. As a matter of fact, it will always for the Christian be a problem, a practical problem, if not a theoretical one. It is a matter of history and experience that the one who develops in his relation to God will also be conscious of a keener sense of sin and know something about the finer distinctions within its category.

II

In the midst of trouble and disturbance and face to face with burdens and problems, man looks for a place of safety. Under such circumstances he is concerned about peace and rest. And he makes more or less serious endeavor to find it. It is apparently more or less natural to make attempts at reconciliation and to be at rest and have peace in relation to the oppos-

ing forces. Man makes these endeavors along various lines. But that does not necessarily mean that the endeavors along one line exclude the endeavors along another line. In some cases it will be found that they are closely connected.

There are endeavors that move along intellectual lines. When it is stated this way it is, of course, not implied that efforts of the thinking mind can ever be excluded entirely. Nor does it mean, on the other hand, that a philosophical system will necessarily be worked out. It means rather that the great emphasis is being placed on the account which the intellect as such gives of man and his relation to life and its contents. In such an explanation there may not be anything radical. But nevertheless something may be lacking. There may even be provision made for God. But if it amounts only to a category, it will not necessarily be considered the equivalent of living religion.

Closely connected with these efforts are the endeavors along the lines of morality. History shows us that man has often made serious and strenuous efforts of this kind for the purpose of attaining to a harmonious personality and having peace in mind with reference to the burdens and problems of life. It is possible to make distinctions of various kinds, of course, with reference to these actions. But two

may be noted briefly. Some of the endeavors will be prompted by a consciousness and conception of the moral law that penetrates beneath the surface of things. Thus the idea of mere perfunctory performance or service is not entertained by such personalities. On the other hand, some actions are apparently only the result of a desire or a command to meet the requirements of the civil laws. And in some cases, if not in many, the reference is confined to the external aspects. Then after all there may not be moral action. With reference to all of these actions, however, it must be said that morality as such is not religion. Yet, of course, it may be admitted that the moral endeavors may be of high and noble quality. But even if that is or has to be admitted, it does not mean that we can see no distinction between morality and religion.

Then there are also endeavors along lines of religion. This does not mean that for the person who attempts to find peace and rest in religion and in relation to God, there are no intellectual problems and no moral efforts. These will quite naturally be included since religion embraces the entire personality. But it means that man turns to God and establishes communion with him and experiences peace in the depth of his consciousness. This experience of peace is, of course, especially true and real when the

disturbance of sin as a terrible reality is considered. The religious person, the believing Christian, will, of course, continue to have his problems of various kinds. But he has found a haven of rest. The logic of life would seem to demand such a possibility of procedure, even though life apparently is stronger and greater than logic. For the person with the weary mind and the wounded and bleeding heart cannot rest his case with a scheme of philosophy nor in his humble moral endeavors. He pushes his way through heaven and earth in search of peace. And he does not rest until he rests in the bosom of God. It is impossible for such a person to rest in any other way. There is thus in actual life a practical demonstration of the genuineness and adequacy of this peace.

The believing religious person then finds that this peace comes from God himself. It is, in other words, something which God communicates to him. And the believer lays hold of it and incorporates it into his own personality. This is not anything new. Believers in all ages have had experiences of this kind. It is this same kind of peace to which Paul refers in Phil. 4:7. It is a peace from God. The genetive τοῦ Θεοῦ is most likely to be construed as a subjective genetive. It is thus seen to be peace which has God as its source.

Closely connected with this idea is the fact that

God is described as a God of peace. We meet this expression a number of times in the letters of Paul, for instance in Rom. 15:33; 16:20; II Cor. 13:11; I Thess. 5:23. The expression illustrates Paul's way of referring to God, or one of his ways. And it may with some justification be considered quite characteristic of his religion and theology. The genetive εἰρήνης in these and other examples is most likely an attributive descriptive genetive. By means of this expression Paul thus gives a description of God. The idea conveyed is perhaps this, that peace reigns in the being of God and characterizes his actions. This, however, is not only Paul's experience and conclusion. It is what every troubled heart finds out in some way, provided, of course, it turns in the right direction.

This peace from God, which the believer experiences in his innermost being and which is really a part of the Christian religion, is, for one thing, experienced in relation to God. The person with the delicate, sensitive heart and the unprejudiced mind will become conscious of his inability and his helpless condition in relation to the disturbing elements of life. And the demands of the will of God he is unable to meet. The problem concerning peace will now be real and serious. But when the person becomes religious he will turn to God in his quest of peace.

And God then gives to such a person what he has been unable to obtain in any other way. It is thus a peace which God establishes between himself and the person who confesses his desperate condition and cries for help. This is God's attitude with reference to man. It is something which the believer has experienced. And it was demonstrated by the one whose life terminated on the cross.

This amounts perhaps to referring to decidedly important things in few and simple words. And in terms of mere reason the person who is not in religion may perhaps object. But it is not the intention to discuss this important subject which perhaps after all is deeper and more mysterious than most people realize. To some extent and with the right understanding we may perhaps be permitted to say that we know, but we cannot explain, at any rate not in terms of reason only. And this, of course, is not detracting from the value and genuineness of what is involved. And then it is to be observed that religion speaks with strong and unmistakable language. And the reality of that which a person has tasted and experienced in his heart from God, will not be argued out of existence by reason.

Then it must also be noted that this peace from God is experienced in relation to life and its contents. There is a close connection between this peace and

the peace in relation to God. This can be said, it seems, even if it must be admitted that it is difficult to account for the connection in every detail. The person who has experienced that God can help him in connection with his burden and problem of sin, will also find that God can be a help, and perhaps the only help, when the other contents of life assume the shape of burdens and problems. Religion is not one-sided. It is not confined to that phase and sphere of life which some apparently would like to discredit entirely. And God is not limited. He is not merely a product of the imagination.

With these observations it seems that the nature of this kind of peace has been indicated. It is the feeling of rest and security and confidence which God grants when the troubled and perplexed soul turns to him with the problems tied up with life. This does not necessarily mean or involve a change or an interference by God in the phenomenal order of existence. But on the other hand, it is not excluded. And it seems that this must be maintained. The one who has experienced the reality of God will not have any great difficulty in this respect, it seems. It must be admitted, however, that in connection with this subject some would speak more categorically than others.

The mere reference to the contents of life is, of

course, enough to indicate the comprehensiveness of the subject. And it can readily be admitted that it would be a tremendous task to account for the contents of life in its many and different phases. For the individual, everything else is objectivity. But inside of this, several categories can easily be distinguished. Thus we may speak about nature and society and that which society produces. The individual is face to face with these all the time. And from them come the things which assail him and make life difficult for him.

This peace must not be confined to a mere abstract consideration. For it exists in actual life. And it can be experienced by the individual. In fact it comes in for consideration because it is a part of life and of religion. The testimony of religious history is rich in this respect. And the big problem would come in in connection with deciding on where to begin and where to end if illustrations were to be given. The word for peace in the New Testament is used in many connections and with various connotations. There is thus a testimony to the effect that people in the various trying and baffling circumstances of life turned to God and found rest and peace. But the references to the New Testament do not exhaust the subject. It is something that has been the case down through the course of history.

RELIGION AND PRACTICAL LIFE

A subject which deals with such a practical thing as peace from God in the heart and mind in the midst of a turbulent life, will naturally meet with objections. The subject will be considered too practical and too tangible and perhaps too simple. It seems that we perhaps have to say that the objections can come from two sources. In some cases it seems they come from the pure orthodox theology with the closed systems and the emphasis on the intellectual data. There is no room for the practical aspects of religion. And if there is, these practical phases have been neglected. In such cases we are reminded of the difference between religion of the head and religion of the heart. But the most severe and bitter criticisms and objections will, of course, come from those who are not in religion and who do not understand it. To them it will seem natural that reason must have the final word. And reason will seem to decide against that which in this case is claimed to be reality. In both of these cases it is reason that asserts itself. And in a final analysis we may perhaps say that the peace from God cannot be made reasonable in the sense in which we ordinarily use the term. But on the other hand, we must insist on the right and the ability to provide a place, a reasonable place, for the data of experience in a philosophical scheme of

religion. When the religious experience has spoken, the verdict must be allowed to stand.

III

True Christian religion will first be found to consist in being. As far as the individual is concerned, it must be conceived of as a state or a condition. And this is but natural. For when Christianity comes into being in the individual, something new will have been incorporated into the personality. And new adjustments will have been made. The person involved finds new forces in his life, new directions and new ideals. And a new relation has been established. He is really, in other words, a new being, even if various modifications would have to be considered in connection with such a general statement. But to what extent even this general nature of Christianity is understood is another question. It need, however, not be considered here.

Then, as we have indicated before, Christianity will also be found to embrace activity. It is impossible to have life and complete passivity. The two contradict each other. In some way life will manifest itself. And it will be seen what its contents are. And, of course, if it is realized that there is an ethical norm, even if it is not admitted that it is the will of God, there will naturally be endeavors to meet the

requirements of the standard. Life, in other words, meets us with a demand. It contains a challenge. And if there are demands and challenges, there are naturally tasks and problems. But all are not conscious of this in the same degree.

History is full of material that reminds us that life has at all times held up its demands and its challenges. And the story of the Christian religion illustrates in vivid manner that Christianity presents a challenge to those who want to be sons and daughters of God. The New Testament may perhaps be said to be remarkable also in this respect. It is true that in all the New Testament writers we find something to remind us that they were conscious of both phases of Christianity. They realized that it was first a personal relation to God. And then it was a life full of challenges and problems. The apostle Paul certainly has elucidated on both of these aspects. All this, however, is only what we should expect. But I think we can say that they were conscious of the practical phase in all its seriousness. It is not difficult to find passages in illustration of this. Jesus Christ himself referred to the subject. Take for instance his exhortation that we should be perfect as God is perfect. I am well aware of the fact that hermeneutics and exegesis have much to say in connection with this passage. But, nevertheless, we cannot escape the

challenge. And what a challenge is there not in his admonition to pass righteous judgments instead of being guided by appearance? The person who has caught a glimpse of its meaning and implication will understand something of the tremendous problem involved. Then we can turn to Paul. One illustration may suffice. Take the beginning of the practical part of Romans, the twelfth chapter. There is enough to make one realize that Christian life is serious. And then anyone who is familiar with the New Testament can easily find a multitude of other challenges.

It would not be easy to take all these various admonitions and challenges and account for them in an entirely satisfactory classification. But two general broad lines of development may be detected, I think. There is a challenge that forces one inward. And there is a challenge that forces one outward. In the first category we have to do with the problems of individual ethics. And in the second we are face to face with the problems that belong to social ethics.

A few remarks should perhaps be made here with reference to this classification. If we speak about two challenges, the reference is naturally more to the formal aspects than to the material aspects. From certain points of view it would perhaps be more correct to speak about one moral challenge. This then can be considered to have two forms or two direc-

tions. Some object to the old method of distinguishing between individual and social ethics. And there is evidently some justification for doing so. It may be admitted that we have to speak about the solidarity of the human race. And when the individual is ethical he is ethical in relation to society. But the individual has certainly not been eliminated in any way. And if there is to be ethics in society, the individual must first come in for consideration. If one is to be ethical in society and in relation to society, he must be ethical as a personality. Ethical society is made up of ethical individuals. It seems then, after all, that we have both individual and social ethics. But it should perhaps be admitted that the reference is more to methodology than to the material itself. And now then, without considering all the material and all the discussion in connection with the problem concerning the relation between the individual and society, we may note a few things in connection with these challenges.

There is then a challenge that drives one inward. One finds himself to be the subject and the object of all that is involved. He has only himself to consider in relation to the challenge and its tasks. That means that one is involved in the problem concerning individuality and personality. The person is concerned with the making of himself. He must try to assume

the right attitudes, enter into the right relations and develop the attributes which the challenge demands.

Such a challenge is naturally important. There are several reasons for this. For one thing, personality occupies a unique and significant place in life. It is really in the center of things. And then it is serious. The making and moulding of personality is always serious business. And realizing how serious it is, we will know that it is important. But the importance of it should perhaps be emphasized more than it is. For we live in a time in which the responsibility of the individual is too easily disregarded. There is a strong tendency to place too much emphasis on the environment. Of course, both environment and the individual have to be considered in the making of character. But the individual must be considered responsible. He is not the mere product of his surroundings. The individual feels a moral religious challenge to which he reacts.

The problem involved will also be found to be tremendous in proportions and comprehensive in scope. For the challenge points to the ideal in every direction. Facing the ideal, one will find that his endeavors will have to be along two main lines. There will be constructive work. And there will be work of a destructive nature. In other words, there will be ambitions to be realized and temptations to be van-

quished. But in spite of all the efforts the ideal will always be in the distance. And the earnest person will always be striving.

Closely associated with the comprehensiveness of the problem is the difficulty. The forming of personality is a difficult and laborious process. There are heights to be scaled and depths to be sounded. And the serious and earnest person will find life to be a struggle. And as he struggles with the ideal he will most likely find that Paul was correct when he said, "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man, but I see a different law in my members, warring against the law of my mind."

And finally we should also note that this challenge, which forces one inward, requires self-examination. One cannot be engaged in the process of making a Christian personality without also being engaged in the process of gaining knowledge concerning himself. The two belong intimately together. The value of knowledge of self has always been recognized. In the Psalms we are reminded of it time and again. Socrates will also be remembered in this connection. It may perhaps be said that he made man as a moral being the object of his study and philosophy. And Thomas à Kempis has brought out this thought a number of times in his book, *Imitation of Christ.* Take, for instance, chapter 2 of book I and note

the emphasis on true knowledge of self as the most useful knowledge. Here again there would perhaps be room for various practical considerations. For the tendency to engage in quiet meditation is not strong at the present time, it seems. And many forces and influences evidently lead in the opposite direction.

Such is the challenge which forces one inward. In connection with it, the individual will be constrained to consider himself and the making of his character and personality. He will meet the ideal. And if he does not disregard it, he will be compelled to strive and struggle. But then there is the other challenge, or form of challenge. For the sake of discussion I think we may refer to it in this way, even if it is the same ethical problem and challenge. This challenge, then, forces one outward, to say it that way. The individual must still consider himself and the ideal. But he must also consider his position in society and his relation to it.

How tremendous the task involved is can readily be seen if one considers how comprehensive society is. Now it is, of course, possible to get an idea of the comprehensiveness of society in various ways. But in connection with sociology and social ethics one will quite naturally be led to think about the various institutions of society. Then we have the family, the state,

the church, and the school. And in considering what these are and what they stand for, one realizes that the task assumes big proportions.

It would be impossible to speak in definite terms if we were to consider or determine how much has been accomplished along these lines by the so-called Christian peoples. But the conditions of society will to some extent serve as an index if one tries to arrive at a conclusion in this matter. Due allowance must, of course, be made for interpretation. But certain things will remain as facts. And it seems that, in considering the various manifestations of social life, one will in many cases be reminded of what may be called deplorable conditions. And that is not all. But it seems that one does not have to be a pessimist to arrive at this conclusion. If we then venture to think that much has been accomplished, we must on the other hand admit, and perhaps with shame, that much remains to be done by way of living up to the high standard.

A question with reference to the reason for such a state of affairs can easily then force itself upon us. To such a question there will naturally be several answers. The serious Christian, however, will not neglect to think about it. And he will also have his opinion concerning it.

RELIGION AND RELATIONS

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

COOLEY: Social Organization
CHRISTOFFERSEN: Kristendommen og Menneskeslaegtens Hjemliv
LUTHARDT: The Saving Truths of Christianity
LUTHARDT: The Moral Truths of Christianity
MARTENSEN: Den Christelige Ethik
A KEMPIS: The Imitation of Christ
ELLWOOD: Man's Social Destiny
KENT: The Social Teachings of the Prophets and Jesus
WESTCOTT: Social Aspects of Christianity
MATHEWS: The Social Teaching of Jesus
GARDNER: The Ethics of Jesus and Social Progress
MACKAY: The Disease and Remedy of Sin
INGE: Personal Religion and the Life of Devotion
DAVIS: Christianity and Social Adventuring
FINNEY: Causes and Cures for the Social Unrest
KAGAWA: Love the Law of Life
BARTH: The Word of God and the Word of Man

CHAPTER VI

Religion in Individuals

I

RELIGION may be studied as a system or as something objective. But the intellectual acquiring of the teachings of religion is not the same as religion. Religion is something that enters into the life and being of a person and takes possession of him. Now, life teaches us that individuals are different. But in spite of the differences religion may be embraced by the individuals. Religion itself is the same in all cases. But the individuals, into whose lives it enters, are different. And their religious attitude and outlook and conduct will naturally be different. The actuality of these differences in connection with religion in the lives of individuals is plainly manifest in life.

A few brief references to a few of those who have gone on before us will illustrate this, I think. This can be considered without any intention or attempt to give complete biographies or review the history of the church. And since only a few can be considered or mentioned, it will be necessary to choose from the

many. It must also be admitted that others could have been chosen with equal propriety. They will serve only as illustrations of the religious individualities.

The ancient church has a considerable number of prominent devout believers. One of these is Augustine, the bishop of Hippo in Africa. That man has been the object of study many times. And for more than one reason he may be considered worthy of our consideration.

Augustine had a devoted and pious mother. But in spite of her prayers and serious efforts to win him for the Christian religion he spent his youth in wickedness and sin. During these years he was entangled in different snares. He yielded to a carnal nature and satisfied its cravings. Nine years he spent with the Manicheans in quest of a deeper insight into truth. And failing to find here what he looked for, he turned to Neo-Platonism. All these years he was restless in every respect.

But there came a change. In his thirty-second year he was converted to God. This happened in connection with the reading of the last two verses in the thirteenth chapter of Romans. And Augustine says that, when he had finished the reading, he experienced the light of peace in his heart, and the entire darkness of doubt had disappeared. Then he went to

his mother and told her of his experience. And naturally they rejoiced together. And she praised God. This was the change and the turning point. And from that time on he spent his life, thirty-eight years, in the service of the church and the kingdom of God.

Augustine was a great man. And it is as a Christian that he is known as such. We can, perhaps, not say that he acquired an amount of learning equal to that which Origen, or Jerome, or the church-historian, Eusebius, possessed. But he was a genius and a powerful spirit. And when a few exceptions are made, he was greater than all his contemporaries. And he was greater than most of the men of the following centuries.

It is, of course, possible to think of a number of things in connection with Augustine as a Christian. One thing that must be mentioned is his realization of having been converted. He was a man who was conscious of a decided change in his life. Christianity to him was a new and changed life. And he referred to the reality of conversion. It has been said that one of the keynotes of his sermons was the experience of conversion.

And then his Christian life was a life devoted to service. There was a manifestation of activity along various lines. He is the author of a number of works.

Best known are, perhaps, his *Confessions* and the philosophical and apologetic work, *De Civitate Dei.* But he dealt with various other subjects in his writings. He was also a great and active preacher. It is related that he often preached five days in succession and sometimes twice a day. In his sermons and lectures he often expressed himself concerning ecclesiastical problems and other questions in connection with the city or the province. Then he also managed the affairs of his office. And he lived in a simple and plain manner with his clergy in one house which became what may be called a seminary of theology.

It can be said that he was a Christian with his whole heart. Faith with him received a prominent place. And he has expressed the opinion that it precedes knowledge. To an expression of this kind we may, perhaps, want to add our modifications. Our criticism will, of course, depend on what we include in the concept of faith. If it, however, is taken in the required sense, it is a deeper truth than many realize. He was also a philosopher. And he used all his excellent powers of reason to the full extent in defense of the Christian religion. To him knowledge and reason were not an obstacle to embracing God in simple faith.

It is not difficult to point to several things which might be called characteristics of his own personal

relation to God. For one thing we should have to mention praise and gratitude. We need only turn to his *Confessions* to be reminded of this. The following words breathe the spirit of praise: "Great art Thou, O Lord, and greatly to be praised; great is Thy power, and Thy wisdom has no end. And man, being a part of Thy creation, wants to praise Thee." In another place he says, "O Lord, I am Thy servant. I am Thy servant, and the son of Thine handmaid. Thou hast loosed my bonds. I will offer to Thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." These words express the sentiment of gratitude.

To point to another characteristic, we might refer to a sentence which has so often been quoted. I am thinking of the words, "Thou hast created us for Thyself, and our heart is restless till it rests in Thee." These words have by some been considered the finest sentence in the entire book. We do not need to decide on that, however. But the sentence is a significant statement. Here, I think, we find something to remind us that Augustine conceived of his life away from God as a terrible struggle. And when he became a Christian he rested his sick and weary heart with God.

We can, then, say that Augustine showed his Christianity in all the different affairs of life. Some of his formulated theology we will not now accept in

detail. But it seems we have to say that he used his ability to the best of his knowledge in the interest of the kingdom of God. And he lived a rich personal life in communion with his God and his Saviour. And we should note that this active, devoted Christian life takes its beginning after a comparatively long period with many and various experiences away from Christianity.

If we now turn to the great period of the Reformation we will perhaps first think of men like Luther and Calvin and Zwingli. And this is perhaps only natural. But there were, of course, others who were not only prominent in the great movement but were religious individuals. Among them Melanchthon would have to be counted. Without any question he must be considered one of the great men of the Reformation.

Melanchthon had gone through the universities, had acquired a good education, and become distinguished as a classical scholar. But he had also come to realize that there was a decided distinction between true and living Christianity and theology as it was generally being presented in the universities by scholasticism. And while he may be classified as a humanist he was a Christian humanist.

In a comparison of him with Luther it is, of course, readily seen that the two were different if

not entirely different. And Luther himself admitted that and pointed it out time and again. In Melanchthon there is not very much to remind of the mystical experience. This was more prominent in the life of Luther. Again, Melanchthon's conception of faith was expressed more in terms of the intellectual and theological than in terms of the mystical and religious. This, however, need not be a negative criticism of his religion.

He cannot be classified as a great philosopher. But he was a faithful and conservative theologian who weighed and considered everything to which he gave formal expression. All of this can more or less be seen in the *Augsburg Confession* of which he is the author. The theology is, of course, Luther's as well as Melanchthon's and perhaps Luther's in the first place. But it is Melanchthon's presentation of it. It must also be said that he was conciliatory in spirit. He loved peace and preferred to avoid wrangling and controversy. Here again he was different from Luther. It is possible that Melanchthon sometimes showed too much of a tendency to yield to his opponents.

It is, of course, possible to bring in things against him. But in spite of all he was Luther's faithful friend and co-worker. He tried to be sincere and true in all his relations to man and God. And with

this kind of attitude he served the great cause of the Reformation.

Every period has its prominent characteristics also among individuals. This is, of course, also true of the more modern period. When we think of individuals in connection with religion it is only a problem of selecting them and a matter of pointing to them. In the history of the little country of Denmark one can hardly avoid being reminded of a man whose name has been mentioned before in these pages. I am thinking of Sören Kierkegaard.

It is impossible to do justice to Kierkegaard in a few remarks. And his picture cannot easily be drawn. In the different periods of his life, even his childhood, there is something that reminds of the peculiar. Through the attacks of doubt and despair and the religious crises he attained to a firm religious conviction. His life was not long, but it was full of experience and activity. When we now look at him from a distance we can easily see that he was more important than his own age realized. And he will, perhaps, continue for some time to be the object of study and consideration. The literature about him now has attained to considerable proportions.

He was endowed with a bright and keen intellect and a vivid imagination. And these talents he developed and manifested in his literary activities which

stretch over a number of years. In his productions can easily be detected three more or less prominent features, the esthetic, the religious, and the more or less purely polemical. It was in his writings that he gave his age to understand what his conception of Christianity was and what he thought of his contemporaries in the church. With a facile pen, a keen mind and a biting sarcasm he now not only gave a religious philosophical presentation of what true Christianity was, but he hurled his invectives at the official Christianity or Christendom in the church. The very last part of his life was devoted to severe criticism and merciless attacks upon the church in its official capacity.

It is difficult to interpret Kierkegaard. And very likely interpretations will never agree in details. It must be admitted that he was secluded and lived in seclusion. We should also have to say that he was decidedly subjective and failed to make room for a true objective analysis and interpretation and judgment. Consequently his criticism would easily become one-sided. His relation to God, however, we have no right to dispute. And his ability, his influence, and his importance cannot be questioned.

As long as we are thinking only of illustrations, we might now turn to the country of Norway and stop for a few minutes to consider a man whose

name perhaps deserves to be better known. It is the simple, yet great, lay-preacher, Hans Nielsen Hauge. He was not a well educated and prominent theologian. Yet he accomplished great things not only for the kingdom of God, but for his country. And his name has gone down in history. Today we may find his name not only in encyclopedias and church-histories, but by this time several single volumes have been written in elucidation of his life and work. Certainly, no history of the church of Norway would be complete without a section about this man.

Hans Nielsen Hauge's parents were farmers. And in spite of the dead spiritual conditions they were both serious and religious people. There were several children in the home. And with one exception they were all very bright and gifted in various directions. In this home the boy, Hans, spent the first twenty-five years of his life.

He grew up under the influence of religion. And he was himself very religious and became more and more serious. He read all the religious literature available. And in his home the best Christian books of the time could be found. He did not, however, have a sudden conversion. There had been a process of development stretching over some time. And one spring day, when he was working in the field, he had his decisive spiritual experience. He was singing one

of his favorite hymns. And during the singing of this song he experienced the nearness and the call of God. And he promised to follow God's call and serve him.

He considered himself then to have been called by God to do a special work in his kingdom. But he was sober and sane and conservative in every respect. His task he took to be that of preaching the gospel, or more specifically, preaching repentance. He was interested only in seeing that people turned to God. He did not entertain thoughts about organizing a new church, nor reforming the dogmas and the liturgy of the church.

The beginning of his work as a messenger of God was in his own home. And his own folks at home were first converted. Then he addressed himself in simple and plain language to individuals with whom he came in contact. And finally he began to conduct public meetings. We thus see that he was composed and careful in his procedure.

In his work of evangelism Hauge traveled through the country of Norway from one end to the other. This work covered a period of several years. It was hard work in more than one sense. It was full of opposition and disappointments and suffering of various kinds. He was in prison several times and suffered injustice and abuse. But he came in contact

with all classes of people. And the message of repentance and salvation was preached throughout the land. And in spite of all there were rich blessings and great results. People were converted to God.

Hauge was a very able and gifted man. What an education would have done for him we can, of course, not say. But we have to admit that he accomplished a great work. Not only did he do much for the cause of the kingdom of God throughout the land of Norway, but he was also active along other lines. He had organizing ability. And he started different business enterprises. Included among them were both saltworks and paper-mills. He was a true and warmhearted Christian. That cannot be disputed, I think. And it is also generally admitted that he was a true son of the Lutheran church.

But where shall one stop in dealing with a subject of this kind? This question will easily arise. For the subject is comprehensive. And there are many others, who with equal right might challenge our attention, and whose lives would remind us that the Christian faith is a living reality. Eventually we would have to say with the writer of Hebrews, "The time will fail me." We can see then that God enters into the lives of individuals. And their Christianity can be seen in their lives. There may be different conceptions and different manifestations. But the individuality re-

mains. The important thing to note is this, that in spite of differences there may be living Christianity.

II

Observation of life, then, teaches us that individuals are different even if they are religious and religion characterizes their lives. When we, however, begin to inquire concerning the causes and factors that have to be considered in connection with these differences, we are face to face with a difficult and comprehensive task. It is not easy to enumerate all the different factors that enter in. And it is, perhaps, even more difficult to arrange them in a system. But we know that they exist and exert their influence.

In making a few brief references to this subject, however, it seems that it is possible to speak about the subjective and the objective factors. Yet it will, perhaps, be necessary to admit that even such a general classification labors under certain difficulties. It is, of course, in connection with the old problem concerning the subjective and the objective. For some there is the problem as to whether personality is to be understood and interpreted entirely in terms of the subjective or entirely in terms of the objective. But even if one feels that it is not a question of choosing between the two, but a problem of combining them, there is the difficulty of drawing the line

between the two and deciding what is purely subjective and what is purely objective.

If we then speak about the subjective and the objective factors we may refer to the temperament as a subjective factor. Now, it is not the intention to make any attempt at arriving at a final conclusion as to what temperament is. In a final analysis we will, perhaps, be forced to admit that we cannot explain it satisfactorily even if we admit the reality of it. The attempt to explain it entirely in terms of chemistry must as yet be referred to as a kind of hypothesis, it seems. To observation temperament seems to be something like a quality which more or less characterizes the personality. It belongs to the constitution of the person. And it puts its stamp upon his actions and reactions. It does not, then, make so much difference how many different kinds of temperament we count. We may count two. And we may in accordance with the general custom count four. But it may, perhaps, be just as easy to speak of eight as Höffding does in his psychology. The important thing to be noted is this, that temperament is a reality and that it lends color to the life of the individual.

With reference to religion, this then means that Christianity, in being incorporated into the life of a person, will be stamped by the dominating qualities of the personality. This is not a mere abstraction. It

is something that can be seen in life. And furthermore, we should reasonably expect it to be the case. The light and lively temperament, which to a great extent sees things only on the surface, will quite naturally act more or less in the same way in connection with religion. On the other hand, the deep and contemplating temperament will take religion more seriously and perhaps at times yield to a too pessimistic interpretation. The influence of temperament on religion can be seen all over. Take Luther for example. His choleric temperament can undoubtedly to a great extent be traced in his religion and in many of his expressions. And consider Melanchthon. I think we are safe in saying that one can find his temperament and disposition both in his religion and in his theology.

One other factor of this kind, which may be mentioned, is that which we may refer to as intellectual ability and attainments. We know that education changes a person. It provides new material for the mind. It develops the analytical power. And it widens the horizon. But this means that the educated person will see many things in a new light. The concepts will be changed. And while many problems will be solved, it will ordinarily mean that new and greater and deeper problems will come to the front and press for solution.

Such a person will naturally embrace and interpret religion with all the mental equipment at his disposal. It does not mean that such a person is less sincere and earnest and serious. Quite the contrary may be the case. He may be even more serious in his endeavors than many others. The mere fact that one becomes a Christian, does not mean that all the problems in psychology and metaphysics and philosophy will be solved. This the educated person will especially feel. And he will naturally try to develop or become an integrated personality also with reference to his religion. In a study of the life of Martensen-Larsen, the distinguished Danish theologian, we are reminded that problems of one kind or another continued to spring up. And new solutions and new adjustments were required. Hans Nielsen Hauge, on the other hand, did not have a formal education. And in connection with him we see a different situation. There is quite a contrast between him and Martensen-Larsen.

To abide by the classification in spite of certain difficulties we may now turn to what may be called the objective factors. This field is evidently large. And it would not be easy to account for everything in detail which might be included. But a couple of things may be mentioned.

There is, for one thing, the church. We know that

the church, in spite of all the various weaknesses, is a powerful institution, both with reference to material wealth and with reference to learning. It still possesses prestige and something of a commanding position. And its influence is felt. Now it is but natural that the person who becomes religious will permit himself to be guided by the church. If the person affiliated with a church at the time of his conversion, it will naturally be that church. If he did not, it will be the one which in some way attracted his attention. Thus the individual will to a very great extent be guided in his religious development by a particular church or confession.

In this connection there would be room for various considerations. We can, of course, see that both the material and the formal aspects of religion will be involved. Ordinarily the individual will receive information concerning the contents of religion from the church to which he belongs. And this is natural. But it is especially in connection with the formal aspects that the influence of a particular church will be seen. Thus we will often find that the doctrines and dogmas of a particular church will be considered the right, and perhaps the only right, containers of religion. And we may also find that the liturgical practices of a certain church will be considered the most correct, and perhaps the best, manifestations of religion and worship.

There are, of course, exceptions to all this. But in general it seems to be the case. Most people, perhaps, never question anything in connection with their church. Everything is accepted and incorporated into their religion. And they remain with their church. On the other hand, there are some, perhaps more than we realize, who raise questions and make their own interpretations and constructions. But the teaching of their church is the formal expression of their religion. There are not very many who make or suggest any changes or modifications of any kind. They want to stay with their church even if they consider the possibility of making certain changes. Luther, in the beginning of his religious activities, was not thinking about leaving the church to which he belonged. But John Calvin was converted to the Protestant religion. And one of Charles Wesley's sons joined the Catholic Church.

Another thing, which may be mentioned as a factor, is what we may call position and station in life. Even in a democratic form of society there is something that may be called occupational stratification. Classes in the occupations and professions exist. And class consciousness has developed. With this there is a tendency to develop a social status for each of the classes, even if it is not always clearly defined. Now, even if religion is a powerful institution, it is here

face to face with another form of institutionalization. And the person who becomes religious will consciously or unconsciously yield to the influence emanating from the class of society to which he belongs. It will perhaps be observed, however, that this influence will be mainly along practical lines.

It is, then, seen that individualities continue to exist, also in religion. But it must be admitted that various factors enter into the making of them.

III

It is, of course, evident that while the individualities remain they have in many cases reached the vanishing point. And the differences as far as the religious life and manifestations are concerned are hardly perceptible. Great numbers of individuals, while the distinctions remain, will nevertheless be found to conform to certain broad lines of manifestations. And thus it becomes possible to account for the manifestations of religion in terms of categories rather than in terms of individualities. But it is, of course, a question how we can best refer to these categories and describe them.

In philosophy and psychology of religion we have references to types of faith. And several types are mentioned and briefly described. This seems possible because it has foundation in reality. Yet it is neces-

sary to note that ordinarily no individual is an absolutely pure type. In a consideration of the temperaments it is generally observed and admitted that no person is exclusively of one temperament. There is a mixture. The same holds true with reference to the religious types. But there will be certain prominent and dominating features. And these features will serve as foundation for classification as to category or type.

There is a question with reference to the number of categories or types. This is a difficult problem because the religious life and its manifestations are complicated. A classification of only two divisions seems to be entirely too general and broad. It would appear that the prominent characteristics cannot thus be accounted for. And it would be necessary to describe shades and variations in terms of subdivisions. To speak about four types in line with the old classification of the temperaments has more in its favor. Yet it will readily be seen, I think, that it has certain defects. If it is possible to speak about eight temperaments instead of four, it is also possible to speak about eight religious types. Thus there is quite a variation. And there will perhaps never be any agreement.

Another question arises with reference to the basis and method of classification. This is, of course, inti-

mately tied up with the first question. Here again there are differences of opinion. And there perhaps always will be. It naturally depends upon what one makes his point of departure in the classification. Thus it is possible to speak about intellectual types and mystical types. On the other hand, it is also possible to characterize the individuals in terms of what they especially emphasize as the contents of their religion, such as rest and peace, or an integrated outlook upon life.

The fact remains, however. There are types or categories as far as the religious manifestations are concerned. This does not mean that the genuineness of religion can be questioned. Nor does it detract from the value of it. And it does not do away with the individuality. Religion in its final analysis is a matter for the individual. It must be incorporated into his life and personality. The question and problem of coming to God and living with God will forever be for the individual.

BOOKS FOR CONSULTATION

AUGUSTINE: Confessions
MARTENSEN-LARSEN: Tvivl og Tro
BANG: Hans Nielsen Hauge og Hans Samtid
BULL: Hans Nielsen Hauge
PETTERSEN: The Light in the Prison Window
GEISMAR: Sören Kierkegaard
STUMP: Life of Melanchthon
RICHARD: Philip Melanchthon

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